

“THAT’S MY EXPERIENCE”: NEGOTIATING WHAT IT
MEANS TO BE “INDIAN” IN A SCHOOL
COUNSELING PROGRAM

by

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ABSTRACT

Schooling for American Indians developed differently than it did for other groups in the United States. This difference is largely the result of the unique relationship between American Indians and the U.S. government and the ways in which government policies and practices were carried out. Thus, any consideration of the present contexts of American Indian education must also take into account past contexts and enduring legacies of imperialism, colonialism, and racism. In this thesis, I argue that history matters and needs to be made visible in the experiences of American Indians in educational institutions today.

Utilizing ethnographic methods, I document the experiences of three American Indian graduate students who were enrolled in a master's degree program in school counseling at a large research university in the Intermountain West that I call Western University (a pseudonym). Emphasizing the importance of ontological and epistemological tensions, I explore the ways in which participants' multiple, situated identities as Indigenous individuals, graduate students, and future school counselors are coconstructed in and through moments of local practice which are closely connected to enduring historical struggles around Indigenous identity, self-determination, and the purposes of schooling. This is a study about education, but it is also largely a study of the multiple ways in which it is possible to be an Indigenous person in the twenty-first century.

This study contributes to theoretical discussions of community membership and what it means to perform legitimate membership in that community. The study also makes theoretical contributions in its insistence in moving beyond simplistic dichotomies in the description (both popular and academic) and actualization of Indianness in the twenty-first century United States. Methodologically, my approach demonstrates the value of weaving together the perceptions, voices, and experiences of the participants with those of community members and university power brokers. Practically, this study suggests that the individual instructors and programs responsible for preparing school counselors and other educational professionals must both approach their own students as diverse learners with distinct ways of being and knowing and prepare them for counseling individuals with distinct ways of being and knowing.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	vii
Chapters	
I INTRODUCTION	1
Looking Back to See Forward	2
Western University and the American Indian Teacher Training Program	10
Summary and Overview	13
II LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAME	16
Learning Styles and Classroom Behavioral Patterns	16
American Indians in Higher Education.....	22
Indigenous Epistemologies	27
Culture, Identity, and Practice	38
Summary	44
III METHODS	45
Research Questions.....	46
Negotiating Access to the Research Site and Participants.....	48
Initial Data Collection: Document Collection Participant Observation, and Field Notes.....	54
Interview and Focus Group Research	56
Researcher Role and Limitations of This Study	60
Summary	67
IV “IF YOU WANT TO KNOW WHO I AM...ASK:” ADDRESSING AND ANSWERING QUESTIONS OF AMERICAN INDIAN IDENTITY IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY.....	68
Sara	69
Ethan	78
Steve.....	84

Summary	88
V NEGOTIATING PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS AND COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS.....	90
The School Counseling Program at Western University	92
The American Indian Teacher Training Program at Western University.....	94
Community Expectations.....	97
Summary	105
VI NEGOTIATING ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS WHILE REMAINING INDIAN	107
Ethan: “I really believe that we’re working within a system”	109
Steve: “I feel a lot of culture being a counselor”	126
Summary	133
VII CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS.....	135
Theoretical Implications	136
Practical Implications.....	144
Appendices	
A INFORMED CONSENT FORM.....	151
B INITIAL INTERVIEW PROTOCOL.....	156
C FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEW PROTOCOL	158
D FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL	160
REFERENCES	162

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In many ways, anthropology as a field has been defined by the study of Indigenous peoples (Deloria, 1969/1988; McCarty, Borgoiakova, Gilmore, Lomawaima, & Romero, 2005). In the field of anthropology of education, much research has focused on education in American Indian communities. In particular, there has been a focus on formal schooling because schooling for American Indians developed differently than it did for other groups in the United States. This difference is largely the result of the unique relationship between American Indians and the U.S. government and the ways in which government policies and practices were carried out. Thus, any consideration of the present contexts of American Indian education must also take into account past contexts and enduring legacies of imperialism, colonialism, and racism. In short, I wish to argue that history matters and needs to be made visible in the experiences of American Indians in educational institutions today.

In this study, I document the experiences of three American Indian graduate students who are enrolled in a master's degree program in school counseling at a large research university in the Intermountain West that I call Western University (a pseudonym). Emphasizing the importance of ontological and epistemological tensions, I explore the ways in which participants' multiple, situated identities as Indigenous

individuals, graduate students, and future school counselors are coconstructed in and through moments of local practice which are closely connected to enduring historical struggles around Indigenous identity, self determination, and the purposes of schooling. This is a study about education, but it is also largely a study of the multiple ways in which it is possible to be an Indigenous person in the twenty-first century. In order to unite these themes, I wish to begin by briefly connecting the history of American Indian education with particular policy periods in the history of relations between the U.S. Government and American Indian Nations. Then, I situate this study in the present moment with a brief discussion of the research site. Finally, I provide an overview of what is to come in Chapters II through VI.

Looking Back to See Forward

When Columbus “discovered” North America in 1492, over 400 sovereign nations, each with its own language, culture, and government, inhabited the continent (Pevar, 2004). While these sovereign nations traded, formed alliances with particular European settlements, and occasionally waged war against others, they maintained their status as sovereign nations. This period of tribal independence lasted until roughly 1787, when the Northwest Ordinance (ratified in 1789) formalized relations between the U.S. government and Indian nations. The Northwest Ordinance decreed that “The utmost good faith shall always be observed towards Indians; their land and property shall never be taken from them without their consent” (cited in Pevar, 2004, p. 6). Between 1787 and 1828, the U.S. government treated American Indian Nations like other foreign nations. A number of laws were passed which attempted to protect Indians from

mistreatment by U.S. citizens. For example, beginning in 1794, American Indian Nations signed over 371 treaties with the United States government in which they ceded over one billion acres of land in exchange for the promise of protection of Indians' interests and the provision of particular materials, goods, and services (Deyhle & Swisher, 1997; Klug & Whitfield, 2003; McCarty & Watahomigie, 1998). One of these services was public education for all American Indian children, which was formalized in the Civilization Act in 1819 (McCarty & Watahomigie, 1998). According to Klug and Whitfield, "early treaties emphasized that education 'appropriate' for Indian students was to be provided" (2003, p. 31). Thus, while trust responsibility and sovereignty were supposed to be the guiding principles of Indian education, "appropriate" is a relative term whose meaning was left to officials at the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) to define. Often "appropriate" education was assumed to be that which both eradicated Indianness and promoted Anglo values and ways of communicating. This discrepancy between policy and practice also occurred outside of educational contexts. U.S. citizens, utilizing violent and illegal methods, routinely took over Indian land. As Prucha (1962) has commented, "The government meant to restrain and govern the advance of the whites, not to prevent it forever" (p. 187).

In the next policy period, from 1828-1887, federal policy was greatly influenced by the election of Andrew Jackson to the presidency. President Jackson was well known for his military campaigns against Indian Nations and his election to the presidency made "removal of the eastern Indian tribes to the West" (Pevar, 2004, p. 7) the explicit goal of Federal Indian policy. The Indian Removal Act of 1830 authorized President Jackson "to 'negotiate' with the eastern tribes for their relocation West of the Mississippi River"

(Pevar, 2004, p. 7). Following the passage of the Act, almost all of the Eastern tribes saw a drastic reduction in their land base or were forced to move west onto “permanent” reservations in what is now the Midwestern region of the United States. Many tribes, were eventually forced or coerced into following the “Trail of Tears” as far west as Oklahoma. In exchange for giving up their land, Indian Nations again signed treaties with the U.S. government for particular services, including education for their youth, health care, and military protection (Deyhle & Swisher, 1997; Klug & Whitfield, 2003; Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006; Pevar, 2004). The U.S. government broke these treaties almost immediately but they continue to be relevant today in terms of an established relationship (and legacy of mistrust) between Indian Nations and the U.S. government.

Following removal, the Federal Government adopted a policy of allotment and assimilation, in which it attempted to instill “American” ideals around individualism and private property in Native Americans. In 1887, Congress passed the General Allotment Act (GAA), or Dawes Act, which divided up communally held tribal lands into individual plots of land with the notion that Indians would become “civilized” if forced to learn how to farm and ranch like European settlers. Once each tribal member had received his plot, surplus plots were sold to White farmers, who were intended as a “civilizing” influence on the Indian farmers and whose presence further diminished Indian lands. It is one of the great ironies of American history that the Indigenous peoples who had been living off of the land for hundreds of years before the arrival of European colonizers, and, in fact, taught the colonizers how to cultivate the land, suddenly needed instruction on how to farm and ranch the land. According to *County of Yakima v. Confederated Tribes and Bands of Yakima Indian Nation* (502 U.S. 251, 254

1992), the goals of the General Allotment Act “were simple and clear cut: to extinguish tribal sovereignty, erase reservation boundaries, and force the assimilation of Indians into the society at large” (cited in Prucha, 2004, p. 8).

In order to truly understand the Dawes Act, it is necessary to look at the consequences of allotment. Due to community-oriented ways of living and lifestyles that allowed for survival in often inhospitable places, most American Indians had no desire to own an individual plot of land. Many sold their land to White farmers or lost their land when they were unable to pay real estate taxes, none of which was remedied in spite of the fact that American Indians were granted U.S. citizenship in 1924. According to Pevar (2004), “Of the nearly 150 million acres of land that tribes owned in 1887, less than 50 million acres remained in 1934 when the GAA was repealed” (p. 9). In other words, American Indians collectively lost roughly 64% of their land base between 1887 and 1934.

In addition to the Dawes Act’s commitment to economic assimilation, the U.S. government was also committed to the social assimilation of American Indians. The passage of the Dawes Act, in conjunction with the Indian Removal Act of 1830 and the Curtis Act of 1898, ultimately obliterated tribally-controlled schools and forced Native American students to attend Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) boarding schools where children were sent and often prohibited from returning home for extended periods of time (Dobkins, 1999; Manuelito, 2005). At the boarding schools, young Native American children were forced to cut their hair and wear military-like, European-style clothing. They were punished for speaking their tribal languages and often found themselves sharing dorm rooms with tribal rivals. Many American Indians lost the ability to speak

their tribal languages (or developed negative attitudes about their tribal language, which caused them not to teach it to their children) while at boarding schools and also internalized imperialistic and colonialist assumptions about Indigenous Peoples (McCarthy & Watahomigie, 1998). Students often ran away from boarding schools and resisted assimilationist policies and practices. Boarding schools, which existed well into the twentieth century, are generally remembered as traumatic and their legacy plays a central role in many American Indian experiences today. As Klug and Whitfield (2003) observe:

Stories have the power to teach values and mores, to serve as warnings about what *can* happen because of what *did* happen. Boarding school stories permeate American Indian communities even today. Children listening to such stories many times hear the message that Whites, whether teachers or administrators, are not to be trusted because of what went on in boarding schools (p. 32).

These stories demonstrate the psychological and emotional scars left by the boarding schools. While only one of the students in this study attended a boarding school, the legacy of boarding schools and education for assimilation provides a foundation of mistrust upon which students' educational histories and their experiences at the university are built.

In late 1920s and early 1930s, several reports were issued and legislation was passed which signaled (in theory, at least), the end of colonization for American Indians. Considered citizens of the United States as of 1924, American Indians were supposed to join immigrants and other members of American society in the great 'melting pot,' where they would all assimilate to the dominant Anglo culture. Often, American Indian students in integrated schools were such a small minority of the population that their needs were overlooked and they were placed in programs for children with "mental retardation," believed to be unable to learn because of deficiencies in their native

languages or their cultures (Klug & Whitfield, 2003). This deficit perspective placed the blame for American Indian school failure on American Indian students and their families. According to Deyhle and Swisher, the “deficit ideology, used by non-Native teachers and administrators, suggested that Indian homes and the minds of Indian children were meager, or empty, thus rationalizing the need for ‘enriching’ Eurocentric experiences” (1997, p. 123). The prevalence of this deficit perspective or “vacuum ideology” (Wax, Wax, & Dumont, 1964/1989) is important because many of these attitudes are still prevalent among academics, school teachers, and American Indians today. In some cases, the students in this study have internalized deficit perspectives. Their professors and their non-Indigenous (predominantly White) peers also draw upon deficit discourses in their interactions with and descriptions of the Indian students in this study. Thus, while one of the goals of this study is to reorient the critique of American Indian education away from individual Indian students and toward the structures of educational and societal institutions, it is important to remember that deficit discourses are still taken up and used by individual actors, as well as written into policies and procedures at the national, state, and local levels.

Following the repeal of the Dawes Act in 1934, Federal policy toward American Indians changed substantially due to a number of factors, including public criticism of Indian policies, the onset of the Depression, and the appointment of John Collier as Commissioner of Indian Affairs. In June of 1934, Congress passed the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA), the goal of which, according to Commissioner Collier’s annual report, was “to rehabilitate the Indian’s economic life and to give him a chance to develop the initiative destroyed by a century of oppression and paternalism” (cited in

Pevar, 2004, p. 10). While the language of “oppression and paternalism” is still present in this statement, particularly in the notion that Indians were lacking in initiative, the Act itself provided for the reclaiming of some land taken during allotment, prohibited further allotment, and authorized the Secretary of the Interior to add land to existing reservations and create reservations for tribes that did not have any land (Pevar, 2004). Further, the IRA encouraged tribes “to adopt their own constitutions, to become federally chartered corporations and to assert their powers of self-government” (Pevar, 2004, p. 10). Finally, Indians were given employment preference within the BIA and a credit fund was established from which loans could be made to federally recognized tribes for economic development projects.

Unfortunately, with the onset of World War II, the Federal government was less willing to invest in economic development projects on reservations. As a result, Indian economic progress declined and then almost collapsed with the passage of House Concurrent Resolution 108 in 1953. The resolution ushered in the era of termination, decreeing, “federal benefits and services to various Indian tribes should be ended ‘at the earliest possible time’” (Pevar, 2004, p. 11, quoting House Concurrent Resolution 108). The Resolution also included a provision for the forced dissolution of the reservations of certain tribes. Between 1953 and 1963, federal assistance to over 100 tribes was terminated. Included in this process were the distribution of tribal lands among individual tribal members and the dissolution of tribal governments, essentially denying the existence of entire groups of people.

Following the termination era, federal policy with regard to Indian Nations shifted drastically again in 1968 when President Nixon commented, “We must affirm the rights

of the first Americans to remain Indians while exercising their rights as Americans. We must affirm their rights to freedom of choice and self-determination” (cited in Pevar, 2004, p. 12). In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Congress passed a number of measures designed to foster Indian self-determination while also maintaining a sense of community. In education, federal policies and funding allowed for, among other things, Indian-controlled schools, the implementation of bilingual or immersion programs for tribal languages, the development of curriculum materials, and the training of native language teachers. Through a grant from the U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity, the first American Indian controlled school opened its doors to Navajo students in the Rough Rock (Arizona) community in September of 1966, with the idea that the school would be a community center, a place where Navajo could be Navajo (McCarty, 2002). Since then, the school has served as a model for other American Indian controlled schools and for programs that educate Native students within mainstream institutions of education; it has also fueled the movement for self-education and local control. Another relevant statute is the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975, which states that tribes and Indian organizations may be permitted to administer federal programs on their reservations. It is out of these acts that the groundwork for the American Indian Teacher Training Program at Western University was laid.

Since 1977, federal Indian policy, in theory, at least, has tended towards tribal independence. In 1983, President Ronald Reagan stated, “This administration intends to restore tribal governments to their rightful place among governments of this nation and to enable tribal governments, along with state and local governments, to resume control over their own affairs” (cited in Pevar, 2004, p. 12). Later, in the 1990s and early 2000s,

Presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush issued executive orders affirming the sovereignty of American Indian nations in relation to business endeavors and education (Pevar, 2004, p. 13). In practice, however, the policies are less clear. Recent struggles over Indian gaming and continued litigation in the *Cobell v. Norton* case suggest unfavorable attitudes toward tribal sovereignty, while the growth of tribal colleges and a very public advertising campaign for tribal colleges suggest the opposite. Perhaps one of the participants in this study best sums up the current state of U.S.-Indian relations when she says, “We’re not sovereign—we’re quasi-sovereign.”

As Lomawaima has written, “The history of American Indian education can be summarized in three simple words: battle for power” (2000, p. 19). Elsewhere, she elaborates and defines the battle for power as a struggle over the ability to define what education is and who “counts” as a Native American and who does not (1995b, p. 331). As will become evident, this battle for power is ongoing. In the following section, I provide a map of the battlefield, introducing one particular front on which the battle is waged.

Western University and the American Indian Teacher Training Program

The American Indian Teacher Training Program at Western University, a large research university in the Western United States, is rooted in notions of sovereignty and self-determination, including self-education. The program’s central goal is to train American Indian teachers and school counselors who will return to Indigenous communities to teach with an understanding of the complicated relationship between Indigenous ways of being and knowing and Western structures of schooling, knowledge

organization, and knowledge retrieval. In contrast, the school counseling program and the university more generally operate from a more assimilationist model, where American Indian students are expected to conform to dominant ways of interacting and completing course requirements such as mock counseling interviews, multiple choice tests, and writing assignments.

The American Indian Teacher Training Program (AITTP) responds to the need for more certified American Indian teachers and school counselors. In 2002, the AITTP was established when the university applied for and received a professional training grant from the United States' Department of Education's Office of Indian Education. The original grant provided funding to prepare twelve American Indian preservice teachers to teach in schools that serve American Indian populations. Since then, the university has applied for and received three more grants, with small changes in focus. I will be focusing on the third cohort¹ of students, which consists of four American Indian undergraduate students seeking teaching certificates and eight graduate students, six of whom are simultaneously seeking masters' degrees in educational psychology and licensure as school counselors.

The grant is a three-year program that includes one year of professional induction services. The students receive a stipend, tuition, a laptop computer and printer for use while in the program, health insurance, dependent assistance, books, training fees, tutoring services, closely supervised programs, and moving expenses. The hope, although it is not always a reality, is that the students will be able to focus on their

¹ AITTP utilizes a cohort model so that students can support one another through difficult and challenging experiences at the university. A new cohort starts the program every summer and usually consists of twelve students distributed between undergraduate and graduate programs in education related fields.

academic work and student teaching (or school counseling internship) without financial, academic, social, or emotional concerns. In exchange, students are expected to achieve high levels of academic success (in the form of good grades) each semester. They must also “payback” the services rendered to them during their time at the university. Program participants are required to teach in Indian-serving schools (as defined by the Office of Indian Education) for the same number of years that they are supported by the grant. The relationship between the U.S. government and tribal sovereigns enables programs that carry payback agreements to be federally funded.

In order to be eligible for participation in the American Indian Teacher Training Program, one must fall with the definition of Indian that is used by the U.S. Department of Education. The definition comes out of Title VII of the No Child Left Behind Act and reads:

INDIAN- The term Indian means an individual who is —
 (A) a member of an Indian tribe or band, as membership is defined by the tribe or band, including —
 (i) any tribe or band terminated since 1940; and
 (ii) any tribe or band recognized by the State in which the tribe or band resides;
 (B) a descendant, in the first or second degree, of an individual described in subparagraph (A);
 (C) considered by the Secretary of the Interior to be an Indian for any purpose;
 (D) an Eskimo, Aleut, or other Alaska Native; or
 (E) a member of an organized Indian group that received a grant under the Indian Education Act of 1988 as in effect the day preceding the date of enactment of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994.

Importantly, this definition of “Indian” encompasses a broader range of individuals than many other definitions of “Indian,” such as those based on blood quantum. As a result, the participants in this study come from a wide variety of backgrounds and identify in different ways even though they are all defined as “Indian.”

For the purposes of this study, I considered students who were enrolled in AITTP to be American Indian.

Summary and Overview

This study builds upon existing literature examining the life and schooling experiences of American Indians, particularly in relation to the areas of identity construction, classroom participation and higher education. My central research questions are: (1) What does it mean to be simultaneously an Indigenous person, a graduate student, and a future school counselor of Native students in the twenty-first century? (2) When and where are these identities in tension and how do individuals respond to these tensions? And (3) How are these identities both constructed within contentious local practice and influenced by historical policies toward American Indians, legacies of colonialism, imperialism, and racism, and Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies? These are important issues to examine because often American Indian identity is viewed as something that is fixed in the past rather than something that is alive, situated, and shifting. Further, of the existing models of American Indian identity construction, a majority address the issue dichotomously utilizing a “two worlds” model that ignores both the complexities of everyday life and the situated, ideologically laden, contested nature of identity. While the unification of American Indian education and theories of identity construction is not new, this study nuances previous discussions of American Indian identity construction and classroom participation in higher education by moving beyond dichotomies that view American Indian individuals as Indians or students. While Brayboy (1999, 2004a) has argued that individuals develop a range of

practices that allow them to be simultaneously good Indians and good students, this study nuances his argument by adding the dimension of professional aspirations. The ways in which this study connects the present educational context to historical policies and practices is also significant.

In Chapter II, I review the existing literature on the classroom participation and interaction styles of American Indians. I also briefly address the literature on American Indians in higher education, focusing especially on Brayboy's (1999, 2004a, 2005a) work. These discussions are intended to provide the reader with a sense of how this study fits into ongoing conversations about American Indians in higher education and lays the foundation for the data analysis that follows. After reviewing the literature, I outline my conceptual framework, emphasizing Indigenous epistemologies and the connections between culture, identity, and practice. This review of the literature and the conceptual framework that follows frame this study, influencing the questions I ask, as well as my choice of methods of data collection and analysis. In Chapter III, I formally state the research questions that guide this study and address their evolution over time. I then address access to the research site and participants, participant selection, data collection and analysis, and the limitations of the study.

Chapters IV through VI are data analysis chapters. In Chapter IV, I introduce the participants, providing basic biographical information and exploring how they self-identify as Indigenous individuals and community members. In Chapter V, I examine some of the macro-level constraints and possibilities in how participants attempt to define themselves via an analysis of the structures of the school-counseling program in relation to the structures of the American Indian Teacher Training Program and community

expectations. Then, in Chapter VI, I analyze micro-level practices in order to address how participants coconstruct identities within the local university context.

Finally, in Chapter VII, I explore the implications of this study for individual American Indian students and the American Indian Teacher Training Program, as well as for counseling education and higher education more generally.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAME

In this study, I explore the ways in which participants' identities as American Indians, graduate students, and future school counselors are constituted within the context of a school counseling program at a large research university, which I call Western University. To do so, I examine participants' experiences within particular moments of contentious local practice at Western University in relation to enduring historical struggles such as those explicitly outlined in the introduction and those that are implicit within structures such as programmatic requirements or community expectations. In this chapter, I review the literature on American Indian learning styles and American Indians in higher education in order to contextualize this study within existing bodies of research. I then discuss Indigenous epistemologies and the relationship between culture, identity, and practice, which serve as the pillars of my conceptual frame and influence how I ask the research questions I ask as well as the methods of data collection and analysis that I chose.

Learning Styles and Classroom Behavioral Patterns

There is a relatively large body of literature pertaining to the learning styles of American Indian students. This literature, focused on students in K-12 education, tends

to emphasize dichotomies between majority students, who are labeled highly analytical and verbal in the classroom, and Native students who are labeled as more holistic and nonverbal learners requiring visual support. Given these characterizations, it is no surprise that much of the learning styles literature emphasizes the classroom participation and interactional styles of American Indian students. While there are multiple approaches to the issue of leaning styles (Cazden, 2001; Dumont 1972; Erickson & Mohatt, 1982; Foley, 1996; John, 1972; Leap, 1993; McCarty, Lynch, Wallace, & Benally, 1991; Philips, 1972, 1983/1993; Suina & Smolkin, 1994; Swisher & Deyhle, 1989), many of the conclusions are similar: American Indian students tend to dislike participating in large classroom discussions, prefer small group work, and consider questioning the teacher similar to disrespecting a community elder.

Many studies approach classroom interaction and learning styles from a cultural differences perspective, which sees American Indian school failure as tied to a lack of cultural congruency between students' home communities and their classrooms (Deyhle & Swisher, 1997; Philips, 1972, 1983/1993). This work focuses on American Indian children's socialization into patterns of communication that are different from their Anglo peers. Philips (1983/1993), for instance, found that children on the Warm Springs (Oregon) Reservation were socialized into different uses of the auditory and visual channels in communication. In contrast to their Anglo counterparts, Warm Springs children were more subtle in attracting the attention of a potential listener, spoke in quieter voices and used subtler gestures. Warm Springs Indians also listened differently; they fidgeted less, verbally interjected less, and tended to show that they were paying attention through shifts in facial expression, mainly in the area around the eyes. Finally,

Warm Springs children were accustomed to longer periods of silence between speakers. When the next person spoke, it was because they made a decision to do so, not because they had been called on by a single authority figure to take their turn. In a classroom with an Anglo teacher and Anglo students, Warm Springs children were often reprimanded for not paying attention and experienced conflict in terms of waiting to be called upon to take one's turn and getting the floor. Philips explained these conflicts as stemming from cultural differences in communicative behavior: the Warm Springs children's more subtle speech style was extremely common in the Warm Springs community and passed from generation to generation, but non-Indian teachers were quick to characterize the behavior of Warm Springs children as stemming from a lack of motivation, a lack of facility with English, or a general lack of cognitive capacity. Other educational anthropologists (Dumont, 1972; Erickson & Mohatt, 1982) have documented similar patterns of classroom participation and interaction and similar responses by non-Indian teachers, sometimes reinscribing and sometimes complicating the cultural difference perspective.

In a critique of the learning styles literature, McCarty, Lynch, Wallace and Benally (1991) argue that, while Indian children are socialized differently, they will actively participate in-class and in both large and small group discussions if the curriculum and instruction are structured in accordance with Indigenous ways of knowing, taking into account out-of-school learning processes, historical experiences (e.g., boarding schools and "confrontative questioning" in a student's second language) and the present situation and context. In their investigation of the implementation of an inquiry-based bilingual social studies curriculum at the Rough Rock Community School on the Navajo

Reservation, McCarty et al. (1991) found that “the degree to which [the curriculum] enables students, through their interactions and explorations of content, to use what they know to learn something new” (p. 50) was one of the most significant factors in the success of the curriculum. In other words, when students are able to incorporate community-based ways of knowing into the classroom, they are eager and adept learners. McCarty et al. (1991) conclude that:

In classrooms where talk is shared between teachers and students, where the expression of students’ ideas is sought and clearly valued, where students’ social environment is meaningfully incorporated into curricular content, and where students are encouraged to use their cultural and linguistic resources to solve new problems, Native American students respond eagerly and quite verbally to questioning, even in their second language (p. 53).

These conclusions build on other studies (e.g., Au, 1979; Foley, 1996) which acknowledge that, while American Indian children are in no way nonanalytical or nonverbal learners, “there are settings in which they may appear so” (Au, 1979, p. 92). Further, these findings suggest pedagogical solutions for moving beyond a cultural difference perspective by taking local context and sociohistorical experiences into account when designing curriculum and instruction for Native students. As Marie Battiste (2002) reminds us in her literature review on Indigenous knowledge and pedagogy:

The first principle of Aboriginal learning is a preference for experiential knowledge. Indigenous pedagogy values a person’s ability to learn independently by observing, listening, and participating with a minimum of intervention or instruction. This pattern of direct learning by seeing and doing, without asking questions, makes Aboriginal children diverse learners. They do not have a single homogenous learning style as generalized in some teaching literature from the 1970s and 1980s. Teachers need to recognize that they must use a variety of styles of participation and information exchanges, adapt their teaching methods to the Indigenous styles of learning that exist, and avoid over-generalizing Aboriginal students’ capacities based on generalized perceived cultural differences (p. 17).

The characteristics of American Indian students that led researchers in the 1970s and 1980s to typify the “learning style” of American Indian students as holistic and non-verbal are the precise characteristics Battiste (2002) enlists to make a case for the diversity of learning styles among Native youth. She argues that while many Native students learn “by seeing and doing, without asking questions,” (typified as the “learning style” of Indigenous students by earlier researchers) individual students go about the actual process of experiential learning in a variety of ways. Further, Battiste’s call for teachers to utilize a variety of pedagogical styles in the classroom while simultaneously becoming aware of the specific learning styles of their students is a technique that will benefit all students in the classroom, not just Native students with diverse learning styles. Moving beyond over-generalized assumptions of a single Native American “learning style” based upon a cultural difference framework is important, but it is also important to recognize the grains of truth embedded in such characteristics and to explore them for a more complete understanding of Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies and how they operate in the world.

Like McCarty et al. (1991), Foley (1996) moves beyond a cultural difference perspective and analyzes the “silence” of Mesquaki youth as strategic. In his 1996 study, the Mesquaki youth were active, verbal participants in the classroom until they reached adolescence and, by high school, only a few, college-bound Mesquaki students were not entirely silent in the classroom. While tribal elders, like many academics, explained the silence of the students in terms of cultural differences, the youth themselves emphasized low self-esteem, boredom, indifference, and sometimes anger at the prejudice they experienced. Foley argued, “The expression of silence is much more than the simple

enactment of learned language patterns and speech styles. It is part of a much larger discursive or ideological struggle between whites and Indians over cultural representations” (Foley, 1996, p. 81). Further, “Mesquaki silence or reserve might be thought of as a strategic, situational speech style that ethnic minorities deploy during relations with whites” (Foley, 1996, p. 81). Thus “silence,” or particular modes of interaction that are interpreted as “silence” by white teachers become empowering tools that allow Mesquaki youth to resist stereotypical representations and manipulate their own identities as members of the Mesquaki tribe and high school students. Foley (1996) concluded his argument by commenting that:

In retrospect, it would seem that sweeping sociolinguistic explanations of Indian silence as a learned speech style are susceptible to glorifying the survival of traditional culture. Conversely, sweeping cultural production interpretations of Mesquaki adolescent rebellion are susceptible to glorifying cultural resistance and rebellious speech acts. Any interpretive model that overemphasizes rational, intentional linguistic acts of cultural preservation may miss the paradoxically self-destructive/self-valorizing quality of the silence of many rebellious Mesquaki youth (p. 89).

Foley makes a tremendous contribution to studies of classroom participation and interaction by moving discussions of silence beyond a cultural difference model.

Ultimately, Foley views “silence” as an element of a larger power struggle between whites and Indians. At stake, in particular, is the power to define what it means to be “Indian.” Mesquaki youth appropriate stereotypical representations of the “silent Indian,” in order to remain invisible at school and avoid interactions with White teachers or peers. Unfortunately, their silence also has the effect of reinforcing dominant stereotypes and making Mesquaki students more visible in their silence. The “paradoxically self-destructive/self-valorizing quality of the silence” (Foley, 1996, p. 89) is a major finding of Foley’s study and it has important implications for the actions of the

individual participants in this study, as well as the larger cohort of students enrolled in the American Indian Teacher Training Program. Whether the students in my study sought to be more or less visible in ways that they thought were strategic, there were often unintended consequences to their actions that were associated with a concomitant visibility or invisibility. These kinds of negotiations will be explored in more depth in Chapters IV, V, and VI.

American Indians in Higher Education

Higher education has historically served many of the same purposes that boarding schools served for American Indian youth. While the colonial colleges theoretically sought to educate American Indian students, there was a discrepancy between policy and practice. Often funds raised for Indian education were utilized to keep colleges financially solvent or to construct buildings for the use of its non-Indian students (Wright, 1997). One example is the College of William and Mary, which was chartered in 1693 so that, according to James Blair, “the Christian faith may be propagated amongst the Western Indians” (as cited in Wright, 1997, p. 76). The College’s remaining records suggest that groups of three to five American Indian students sporadically attended, but that the notion of Indian education was primarily a fundraising ploy. As Bobby Wright (1997) concludes:

When the sincerity of the professed commitment to Indian education in the colonial colleges is measured by comparing announced intentions against actual effort and money expended, there is reason to seriously doubt the genuineness of pious motivation. While the presence of some measure of concern for the Indians’ spiritual welfare is unquestionable, other factors clearly motivated the major figures responsible for the advancement of Indian education and conversion. ... Consequently, the colonial experiments in Indian higher education were not simple expressions of unblemished piety. Rather, they

characterize a drama of self-righteousness, deception and neglect enacted on a stage of failure in Indian education (pp. 77-78).

The characteristics that Wright attributes to Indian education in the colonial colleges are similar to those of boarding schools, particularly in terms of legacies of deception, neglect, and failure. They also continue to plague higher education for American Indian students.

Since the time of the colonial colleges and their Indian education programs, U.S. colleges and universities have resounded with calls for American Indian students to join the great American melting pot—integrating culturally in order to succeed academically (Brayboy, 2004b, p. 18). These pressures are still very much present for American Indian students in higher education today (Barnhardt, 1994; Brayboy, 1999, 2004a, 2004b). As a whole, the work of many scholars researching and writing about American Indians in higher education (Barnhardt, 1994; Brayboy & Castagno, 2006; Castagno, 2005; Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991; Marker, 1998, 2004) highlights the complex relationship between an individual's multiple identities as a “good Indian” and a “good student,” and the connection between the forging of these identities and institutional power structures. Barnhardt (1994), for example, focused on the ways in which American Indian students must become entirely different people in order to succeed in higher education. As an example, she offers an analysis of the classroom participation and interaction choices made by American Indian students in institutions of higher education. She reports on the comments of a Yup'ik Eskimo man to a group of Alaskan educators. The Yup'ik man says:

Don't expect to see Native students [in university classrooms] shooting their hands in the air with the “I know, I know” look. And don't think less of them for not doing so. It is not our way. Our culture teaches modesty. For us success

means not to stand out from the crowd but to live in harmony with everything around us (p. 116).

Barnhardt (1994) analyzes this quote as an example of the costs exacted from Indigenous students who must change who they are in order to survive in institutions of higher education—in other words, they must live life in two worlds. This example illustrates the ways in which the classroom participation and interaction styles required by university professors may differ from the comfortable interactional styles of American Indian and Alaska Native Students. It also highlights issues of ontology (in the hand raising behavior and shouting) and epistemology (“It is not our way”) in relations to educational structures, a topic that I will discuss more fully later in this chapter. In conclusion, Barnhardt (1994) emphasized the changes that must be made to the institutional structure as a whole and to teacher education programs more specifically in order for American Indian students to be themselves, succeed academically, and become effective preservice teachers.

Similarly, Marker (1998) focused on a group of Indigenous graduate students and more specifically addressed how institutions needed to change to accommodate Indigenous students. He argued that incorporating Indigenous knowledge into the classroom may be inappropriate, trivializing, or uncomfortable for Native students (Kaomea, 2003; Marker, 1998) and suggested that what students really needed was for “gatekeeping professors to locate themselves and make the structure of the institution more understandable” (Marker, 1998, p. 474). This argument, in many ways, is at the cornerstone of the contentious relationship between Western educational institutions and Indigenous students and communities. There is simultaneously a recognition that students need to be able to access particular codes of power (Delpit, 1988) in order to

succeed academically and aid their communities (Brayboy, 2005a) and a recognition that students must know who they are and where they come from. While much, if not all, of the knowledge of what it means to be an Indigenous person is acquired outside of school, this knowledge must also be recognized as valuable within academic environments. If either condition is not met, the costs for individual students are tremendous (Brayboy, 1999, 2004a, 2005a).

Like Barnhardt (1994), Brayboy (1999, 2004a, 2005a) has focused on the experiences of American Indian undergraduate students and the costs exacted from them as they attempt to maintain identities as both good Indians and good students. The individuals in his original ethnographic study struggled with multiple issues including their degree of visibility or invisibility on campus, finding friends, class participation, and attacks from non-Indian students, generally privileged Whites. These individuals highlight that there is no one particular way to be a “good Indian” and that there are costs associated with both, at the university and in one’s home community. Drawing on Foley’s (1996) work, Brayboy (2004a, 2005a) analyzes the classroom participation or nonparticipation of American Indian undergraduate students at Ivy League universities in relation to issues of identity formation and representation, as well as transformational resistance and social justice (Solorzano & Bernal, 2001). The students in his study “work the system,” using office hours and independent studies to demonstrate their subject matter knowledge while avoiding “showing off” in front of large groups of their peers. When the Indigenous students themselves or their peers deemed it necessary for them to participate in class, students also had very specific strategies. Debbie, one of the students Brayboy (2004a) portrays, chooses not to speak up in her “Indigenous Peoples of the

Americas” class when the professor incorrectly characterizes her tribe as having a primitive clan system and a simple language. After class another Indigenous student enrolled in the course asked why she did not correct the professor and Debbie later responded that the professor was her elder and said, “What he said is not right, but it is not my place to correct him. He will learn...” (qtd. in Brayboy, 2004a, p. 134). In contrast, John, another student in Brayboy’s study (2005a), chooses to fiercely participate in an in-class discussion about racism and oppression. In both cases, Brayboy (2004a, 2005a) analyzes the students’ actions and their choices to remain invisible or become visible in the classroom as enactments of their abilities to be both “good Indians” and “good students.” Such an analysis moves beyond simplistic discussions of American Indians in higher education as either “good Indians” or “good students” and complicates our ways of thinking about American Indian students in mainstream educational institutions by illuminating how students “work the system,” making strategic accommodations in an attempt to minimize the individual costs for being engaged in social justice work for their communities. This study further builds on this body of literature by exploring the range and variation in ways of being American Indians, graduate students, and future school counselors and further nuancing the conversation about what it means to be a “good Indian” and a “good student” simultaneously. This study also collectively draws the work of Barnhardt (1994), Brayboy (1999, 2004a, 2005a) and Foley (1996), to explore how the limitations and possibilities of institutional power structures influence individuals’ abilities to strategically self-define. As will be addressed more fully later, I choose to analyze students’ actions and their reflections on these actions through a framework of Indigenous epistemologies (Barnhardt &

Kawagley, 2005; Battiste, 2002; Burkhart, 2004; Deloria, 1969/1988; Manuelito, 2005) and contentious local practices (Holland & Lave, 2001).

Indigenous Epistemologies

Many of the existing studies on American Indians and educational institutions highlight cultural differences between American Indian students and their communities and schools normed to White, middle class values. Rather than emphasizing the term culture, I wish to emphasize the Indigenous knowledges and the ways in which that knowledge is arrived at that lie at the root of so-called cultural differences. Another way of thinking about the role of epistemologies is to view them as the threads, which, once woven together, make up the cultural cloth of particular communities (Meyer, 2001). These threads do not reside in libraries or museums but rather are “embedded in the cumulative experiences and teachings of Indigenous peoples” (Battiste, 2002, p. 2). Similarly, Medicine remarks that “Elders are repositories of cultural and philosophical knowledge and are the transmitters of such knowledge” (2001, p. 73). Taken together, these statements suggest that Indigenous ways of knowing and being are embedded in the lived lives of real people and evolve and adapt over time. They are not static, rather they are historically influenced and situated, as the past greatly influences their present incarnations, and they are specific to particular groups of people and places (Basso, 1996; Battiste, 2002). They are also multiple and heterogeneous. Even within a particular community, not everyone will operate from the same epistemological foundation or have the same knowledge base. Battiste (2002) reminds us that:

Within any Indigenous nation or community people vary greatly in what they know. There are not only differences between ordinary folks and experts, such as

experienced knowledge keepers, healers, hunters, or ceremonialists, there are also major differences of experiences and professional opinion among the knowledge holders and workers, as we should expect of any living, dynamic knowledge system that is continually responding to new phenomena and fresh insights (p. 12).

In contrast, historically and in the present moment, the collective American imagination (and the history curriculum taught in a vast majority of the nation's educational institutions) prefers to view Indigenous peoples as something romantic from the past (Owens, 2001; Shanley, 2001; Staurowsky, 1999, 2004; Weaver, 2001). Included in this desire is a need to fix Indigenous knowledges in the past. According to Owens (2001):

America's desire to control knowledge, to exclude the heterogeneous, and to assure a particular kind of being-in-the-world depends upon a total appropriation and internalization of this colonized space, and to achieve that end, America must make the heterogeneous Native somehow assimilable and concomitantly erasable (p. 18).

In other words, for Native Americans to remain as romantic figures from the past, their past and present contributions to American society, particularly its knowledge base, must be assimilated into the indistinguishable national melting pot or erased entirely. In attempting to outline an Indigenous epistemological framework that unifies the experiences of the participants in my study while simultaneously speaking to the range and variation of their experiences, one of the great challenges is fighting against a desire to fix Indigenous Peoples and their ways of knowing and being in a collective American past that is no longer. Shanley (2001) addresses this challenge, commenting that:

Experience as an aspect of the American ethos and identity is inextricably bound to the American habit of absorbing a false sense of American Native epistemology. This habit hardly translates into an understanding of actual American Indian history or philosophy, which is tribally or communally based, but instead shapes a damned-if-you-do-damned-if-you-don't dilemma for Indians—the double-bind in which Indians find themselves when dealing with an ideologically, but not actually, sympathetic “other” (pp. 31-32).

Shanley's (2001) words speak to the power of historicized, romanticized notions of American Indians and American Indian knowledges in relation to a largely ignorant American public. As Staurowsky (1999) writes in relation to the issue of American Indian mascots:

Few Americans, whether educators or representatives from any other sector of the population, have had the opportunity to acquire the depth of knowledge or understanding about this nation's history relative to American Indians that allows for a responsible consideration of this issue (p. 383).

Thus, the American public is powerfully and dangerously miseducated in relation to American Indian epistemologies, often making inappropriate assumptions based on stereotypical or imaginary representations of American Indians and American Indian knowledges. In this study, I attempt to examine various tribally and community-based epistemologies while also remaining respectful of differences in knowledge systems and differences in perspective given my positionality as a White, female researcher educated in Western educational institutions.

Another challenge to initiating or revising such a conversation about cultural differences and epistemologies is the need to do so in a sensitive, thoughtful manner that simultaneously recognizes the distinct foundations of Indigenous knowledge and yet does not resort to viewing Indigenous and Western knowledges as incompatible. Burkhart (2004) remarks:

Literature and philosophy, science and religion, are all very different branches of knowledge in Western thought. Out of these four, most consider only two, science and philosophy, to be branches of knowledge at all. The other two are thought to be entirely different ways in which humans express their being in the world. However, in American Indian thought this is not the case. None of these four can be separated from the others. The lack of distinction here is due, in part, to the fact that knowledge is lived. If we think of knowledge in this way, we have no reason to suppose that any of these four carve up the world in different ways, are different takes on the world (p. 22).

Establishing or thinking in terms of a dichotomy between Western and Indigenous ways of knowing is not particularly useful in that it erases complexity and closes off spaces of possibility. As Battiste (2002) makes clear:

Indigenous scholars discovered that Indigenous knowledge is far more than the binary opposite of western knowledge. As a concept, Indigenous knowledge benchmarks the limitations of Eurocentric theory—its methodology, evidence, and conclusions—reconceptualizes the resilience and self-reliance of Indigenous peoples, and underscores the importance of their own philosophies, heritages, and educational processes. Indigenous knowledge fills the ethical and knowledge gaps in Eurocentric education, research, and scholarship. By animating the voices and experiences of the cognitive “other” and integrating them into educational processes, it creates a new, balanced centre and a fresh vantage point from which to analyze Eurocentric education and its pedagogies” (p. 5).

In other words, an understanding of how Indigenous ways of knowing are connected to Indigenous conceptions of knowledge, power, and culture provides us with another perspective on the Western world, particularly its educational institutions. Such an understanding may ultimately allow us to affect change in Western educational institutions in such a way that both Native students and their non-native peers benefit. It is my hope that the hybrid theoretical and conceptual framework presented here, as well as the data and analysis that follow (particularly the participants’ own words), begin to lay the groundwork for such change, if only at the local level.

In what follows, I will emphasize what Indigenous scholars believe to be some of the central features of Indigenous ways of knowing and their connections to Indigenous conceptions of culture, knowledge, and power. While Indigenous conceptions of culture, knowledge, and power, as well as their epistemological and ontological foundations, are context-specific and get taken up differently by particular individuals and communities, there are some general similarities between these conceptions that I wish to describe here.

This discussion provides a framework for understanding the analysis of data in Chapters IV, V, and VI where I analyze the ways in which ontologies and epistemologies are taken up, used, and contested by individual American Indian graduate students enrolled in a school-counseling program.

Recently, as I will discuss further in the section on culture and identity, the concept of culture has come under attack by anthropologists as a result of its grounding in Western science (Biolsi & Zimmerman, 1997; Marcus & Fischer, 1999; Smith, 1999, 2005) and the notion that culture is something possessed only by the Indigenous “Other” (Clifford & Marcus, 1986; Deloria, 1969/1988; Owens, 2001; Rosaldo, 1989; Shanley, 2001). Here, I wish to emphasize community-based notions of culture within an Indigenous epistemological framework. Brayboy (2005b) has noted that culture from an Indigenous perspective is “simultaneously fluid or dynamic, and fixed or stable” (p. 434). While this statement appears paradoxical, it gets at a fundamental tension. Culture from an Indigenous perspective is about finding the balance between rootedness in a particular physical place and community and the ability to change and adapt in the interest of survival (Basso, 1996; Brayboy, 2005b; Vizenor, 1994). For example, the ability of Indigenous peoples in the Americas to adapt has allowed for the continued survival of both culture and communities in the face of imperialism, colonialism, racism, and genocide since contact with European settlers. In Western anthropological terms, “Indigenous peoples are shaped by their cultural inheritance, and they engage in cultural production” (Brayboy, 2005b, p. 434). Such a conception of culture complicates the body of literature that assumes fixed notions of “culture” when investigating cultural differences between home and school communities as well as the body of literature that

seeks to fix Indigenous cultures and identities in the past, or to define what it means to be a “real” Indian.

Another important consideration is the vehicle through which culture and theory are transmitted in Indigenous communities. Often, culture and theory are conveyed through particular, context-specific stories or ceremonies that have been carried out for thousands of years and, at least in part, characterize the nature of a particular group of people with shared understandings of what it means to exist in a particular place at a particular moment in time. For example, Keith Basso’s (1996) work on the Western Apache suggests that wisdom sits in places as old as (or older than) the origin of the tribe itself and that this wisdom is conveyed through the telling of stories. Basso (1996) writes that, through stories:

People are forever presenting each other with culturally mediated images of where and how they dwell. In large ways and small, they are forever performing acts that reproduce and express their own senses of place—and also, inextricably, their own understandings of who and what they are (p. 110).

In other words, the cultural perspectives portrayed in stories and ceremonies both root the community and allow members of the community to leave the geographical confines of the community while still sharing a particular sense of place that is as much psychological and emotional as it is physical. When Tayo, the protagonist in Leslie Marmon Silko’s (1977) novel *Ceremony*, returns home after a tour in Vietnam, it is the power of stories that helps him spiritually return to the community. Such stories and ceremonies, convey a shared cultural heritage to younger community members, help them to orient themselves in the world, and serve as reminders when they have gone astray (Basso, 1996, 2000; Battiste, 2002) through the lens of community. The same stories and ceremonies also provide guidelines for elders and other community policy-

makers (Medicine, 1997). Thus, Indigenous cultural heritage is conveyed through stories and ceremonies, as are particular ways of knowing and forms of knowledge.

Marie Battiste (2002) writes that, “Indigenous knowledge is systemic, covering both what can be observed and what can be thought. It comprises the rural and the urban, the settled and the nomadic, original inhabitants and migrants” (p. 7). Combined with Battiste’s (2002) observations that Indigenous knowledge and ways of arriving at such knowledge are context-specific and rooted in the lived experiences of individuals and communities, what Burkhart (2004) calls “lived knowledge,” the notion of Indigenous knowledge as an all-encompassing system accounts for the range and variation in the knowledge possessed by the participants in my study and the ways in which they came to know that knowledge (Basso, 1996; Medicine, 2001). It breaks down presumed barriers between reservation and urban, enrolled and unenrolled, and makes it difficult to question the lived experiences of Indigenous individuals and communities. However, Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing often emphasize a connection to place and particularly places imbued with spirituality—“particular landscapes, landforms, and biomes where ceremonies are properly held, stories properly recited, medicines properly gathered, and transfers of knowledge properly authenticated” (Battiste, 2002, p. 13). Initially, this connection to place appears problematic in relation to that which is new, urban, or migratory. However, in my understanding of Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing, context and situation (including historical context) are prioritized (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005; Burkhart, 2004; Deloria, 1992). Thus, experiences of colonization, allotment, and forced relocation have imbued new and urban places, as well as migratory individuals, with a particular power and spirituality connected to the historical

experiences of Indigenous peoples in the United States. Thus, whether one is an urban Indian or a reservation Indian, whether one is an enrolled tribal member or not, he or she is in possession of Indigenous knowledge (and often Eurocentric knowledge as well) that simultaneously shapes and is shaped by his or her perspective on and experiences with the world. I will address the issue of self-authoring and the dialogic process at work here in the section on culture and identity.

Having described the nature of Indigenous knowledge, I wish to make connections between Indigenous conceptions of knowledge, power, and culture, as well as compare and contrast them to Eurocentric notions of knowledge, power, and culture (Brayboy, 2005b). Power, in Western epistemology, is specifically located within individuals or institutions. These individuals and institutions are powerful because, according to Bourdieu's (1973) notions of capital, they have institutionalized cultural capital, such as an academic degree from an Ivy League institution (a particular kind of knowledge), and because they have (or have access to) economic capital in the form of financial resources. Finally, such power, rooted in the colonizing experience and in concepts such as manifest destiny, is used predominantly to dominate or control others. Power does not flow throughout society, but is rather an almost tangible element that some possess and others do not. In contrast, power in Indigenous epistemology is conceived of as an energy that flows throughout the world, inhabiting people and places in particular ways; it is both alive and personal. That is to say that, while power flows throughout the world, it is also extremely rooted and connected to particular places and resources. Further, power, like particular kinds of knowledge, is seen as something that is not knowable by all members of a community—it is both “esoteric” and “confidential”

in its nature, so that it is not abused by those who do not have the knowledge or responsibility to use power in “culturally appropriate ways” (Stoffle, Zedeño & Halmó, 2001, p. 61). Power in this sense is intimately connected to Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing. Such a conception of power as flowing throughout the universe, rather than centrally-located in powerful individuals or institutions, also allows for expressions of Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination in the face of colonization and its continued legacy.

Knowledge for Indigenous peoples is rooted in the principles of relatedness, meaning that all things are connected (Burkhart, 2001; Deloria and Wildcat, 2001), and responsibility, meaning that knowledge comes with a responsibility to use it appropriately and to accept that there are some things which are not supposed to be known (Brayboy, 2006). There is an emphasis on both experiential knowledge and the process by which one arrives at such “lived knowledge,” which can be carried in one’s heart and used in daily life. Keith Basso’s work with the Cibecue Apache speaks beautifully to these conceptions of knowledge. Dudley Patterson, Sam Endfield, and Charles Cromwell, all seasoned horsemen and elder members of the Cibecue community, use a story to chastise Talbert Parsons, a younger member of the community for his recent wild behavior while drunk. The story is rooted in a place called “Trail goes down between two hills.” As Basso comments, “Dudley and his companions wanted Talbert to remember what they would urge upon him by attaching it to something concrete, something fixed and permanent, something he had seen and could go to see again—a place upon the land” (Basso, 1996, p. 118). In this way, wisdom is rooted in personal experience and places and is expressed through the telling of stories like the one Dudley tells Talbert.

Importantly, Talbert had to recognize the error in his ways before Dudley and the other horsemen could tell him a story to aid him in learning the lesson he needed to learn for personal growth at that moment. In Apache culture, there is a “trail of wisdom” that must be followed in order to gain knowledge and one’s mind must be cultivated in order to receive wisdom: it must be smooth, resilient, and steady (Basso, 1996, p. 130). In narrating the process by which one comes to wisdom, Dudley asks, “How will you walk along this trail of wisdom?” and answers his own question, saying:

Well, you will go to many places. You must look at them closely. You must remember all of them. Your relatives will talk to all of you about them. You must remember everything they tell you. You must think about it, and keep on thinking about it, and keep on thinking about it. You must do this because no one can help you but yourself. If you do this your mind will become smooth. It will become steady and resilient. You will stay away from trouble. You will walk a long way and live a long time (as cited in Basso, 1996, p. 127).

Thus, the purpose of knowledge, first and foremost, is to ensure personal growth, rooted in relationships with other members of the community and with the places the community inhabits. In Talbert’s case, Dudley and his companions wish to imprint a place in his mind, along with the lesson, so that he may use the knowledge on a daily basis, whenever he is tempted to take up drinking again. The insight Talbert gains through the horsemen’s story also leads to professional skills—when he is sober, Talbert is an excellent horseman who works with Dudley and his companions in a way that benefits the community as a whole. Finally, the motivation for the telling of the story is also rooted in a sort of Indigenous Cartesian principle. If Decartes’ version of the Cartesian principle says “I think, therefore I am,” an Indigenous version says, “We are, therefore I am,” (Burkhart, 2004) recognizing that an individual survives and is motivated in the world as a result of his connection to community (Brayboy, 2005a, 2005b). Thus, in an

appropriately functioning system within an Indigenous epistemological framework, a reciprocal relationship exists where communities act to support individuals and individuals act with the best interests of their communities in mind.

In contrast, Western definitions of knowledge emphasize the development of professional skills and credentials over personal growth and lived experience. Someone who is smart in the Western tradition generally has “book smarts,” although professional experience may be valued in particular fields, such as medicine or teaching. Often, one is financially compensated in direct relation to their credentials, suggesting the degree to which Western conceptions of knowledge value “book smarts” or abstract theories and professional skills. The quest for knowledge is also fundamentally different within the Western tradition, in that the knowledge sought is propositional in nature (Burkhart, 2004). Thus, individuals concerned with knowledge in a Western sense focus on the search for eternal truths, laws, and principles which may be proven through the posing of hypotheses, test construction, and “scientific” experimentation. Viewed from an Indigenous perspective, even Western social scientists seem to know what they’re going to find before entering the field. In “Anthropologists and Other Friends,” Vine Deloria remarks on the absence of recording instruments (pen, pencil, notebook, or tape recorder, to name a few) among anthropologists studying American Indians because “he [sic] ALREADY KNOWS what he [sic] is going to find” (1969/1988, p. 80). Research is only conducted to prove fundamental “scientific” truths and Western society’s quest for this knowledge is unending. Finally, the goal of this search for knowledge within a Western epistemological framework is not ultimately to make us better human beings. Instead, those individuals and institutions who are powerful may possess knowledge just for the

sake of possessing knowledge and those who lack power, may be the subjects of such knowledge when it is applied within a capitalist system to create better workers and contributors to the economy. This quest for knowledge is fundamentally different from the “trail of wisdom” and other Indigenous conceptions of knowledge in terms of the purposes for acquiring that knowledge, the ways in which knowledge is acquired, and the ultimate goals of such knowledge. In relation to this study, I rely on such discussions and distinctions with regard to culture, knowledge, and power in my exploration and critique of the relationship between Western educational institutions and American Indian communities. These frameworks allow me to demonstrate and explain the range and variation in the lived experiences of three particular American Indian graduate students enrolled in a school counseling program and to describe and examine the particular practices of individuals in relation to their lived experiences. Additionally, I draw theoretical and conceptual insights from the body of research dedicated to relationships between identity and culture situated within local practices because these insights provide me with a lens for understanding how the participants in this study attempted to construct identities for themselves within the historically influenced and situated university environment where they are challenged by institutional policies and practices and the actors charged with carrying them out (e.g., professors, program administrators).

Culture, Identity and Practice

Anthropologists have written about, against, and beyond the concept of culture in various ways (González, 1999, 2004)—what has resulted is an awareness of culture as simultaneously located within interactions, connected to macro-level ideologies and

hybrid in nature. In anthropology of education, scholars have expanded upon this awareness by connecting culture to “the relationships among power, knowledge, and identity” (González, 2004, p. 17; Hall, 1999), which are seen as key issues in education and educational research. While this study addresses all of these relationships at some level (indeed it is almost impossible not to, given their closely intertwined nature), I will frame my study in terms of theoretical developments that articulate the relationship between culture and identity and emphasize the formation of individual and collective subjectivities through interaction (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998; Warriner, 2004).

As part of this larger discussion of the meaning and value of culture as a theoretical construct, anthropologists, sociolinguists, and educational scholars from other disciplines have focused on the hybrid, socially-constructed, place-specific, and creative nature of identity. Focusing on the contributions made by anthropologists of education, Kathleen Hall (1999) writes that:

[They] are developing theories of culture and identity that provide greater explanatory power as they give attention to both the multiplicity of individual paths through schools and the fragmented and often contradictory perspectives students defined as ‘other’ hold toward schools and their schooling experiences (p. 143).

Previously, identity (like culture) was thought of as static and uniform in nature. This theoretical development emphasizes that individuals have a multiplicity of identities in process from which to choose at any given moment while they are simultaneously being influenced by larger societal ideologies and power struggles. Levinson and Holland (1996), Hoffman (1998), and Holland and Lave (2001) address the relationship between culture and identity. Levinson and Holland (1996) focus on “the cultural production of

the educated person,” by which they mean that, “[t]hrough the production of cultural forms, created within the structural constraints of sites such as schools, subjectivities form and agency develops” (p. 15). As individuals are engaged in cultural production, they are also culturally produced by the structures at work within a given location. Further, individuals within or outside (dropouts or individuals without formal western schooling, for example) of structures such as schools, “may produce practices and identities consonant with local cultural notions of the ‘educated person,’ but some practices and identities may in fact challenge those notions” (p. 21). With such theories as part of my theoretical framework, I consider identity and culture as identities in process, simultaneously influenced by their own agency within the institution and by institutional structures. Levinson and Holland’s (1996) work on the “cultural production of the educated person” is theoretically useful in that it helps to explain the relationship of culture and identity through the interplay of university structures and student agency.

Holland and Lave (2001) build upon the groundwork laid by Levinson and Holland in outlining a theory of history in person, which is rooted in a theory of practice that emphasizes processes of social formation and cultural production. The primary tenet of such a theory of practice is “that the political-economic, social, and cultural structuring of social existence is constituted in the daily practices and lived activities of subjects who both participate in it and produce cultural forms that mediate it” (Holland & Lave, 2001, p. 4). Thus, beginning from “situated participation in explicit local conflict” (Holland & Lave, 2001, p. 5), history in person is somewhat of an umbrella term that refers to a complex set of relationships between a) “the network of relations between subjects’ intimate self-makings and their participation in contentious local practice” (2001, p. 5),

and b) local contentious practice and “broader, more enduring (historical, processual and open-ended) struggles” (2001, p. 5). The two sets of relationships are constantly informing one another through an individual’s engagement in contentious local practice. Drawing on Bakhtin’s notions of dialogism, self-authoring, the sociality of the intimate self, and the boundaries between self and other, Holland and Lave (2001) outline a theory which emphasizes the relationship between structures which are constantly in the process of being produced or reproduced through enduring struggles and the agency of individuals whose subjectivities are historically-produced and constantly contested in and through contentious local practices. In this study, such a theoretical framing allows me to account for the micro-level negotiations around identity as well as the macro-level struggles over what it means to be an Indigenous person in the twenty-first century or what it means to seek community self-education. Perhaps most importantly, such a framework allows me to connect the micro- and macro-level struggles within the arena of contentious local practice at the university.

Dialogism refers to the notion that individuals are always in “a state of being ‘addressed’ and in the process of ‘answering’” (Holland & Lave, 2001, p. 10). Within contentious local practice, individuals’ addresses and answers intensify and they tend to draw upon local cultural genres. In relation to this study, the concept of dialogism suggests that the university, as a site of contentious local practice between individual American Indian graduate students and institutionalized university structures, is an ideal place to study the formation and contestation of particular identities through practice, in this case participants’ identities as American Indians, graduate students, and future school counselors. Also, the ways in which individual American Indian students engage in

particular local practices illustrates their facility with cultural forms considered appropriate in the university setting and their facility with cultural forms from their home communities, which may not be welcomed in the classroom. That is, in constructing subjectivities, individuals must draw upon existing language or existing cultural forms that are understood by others. This is about dialogism, but it is also about establishing or challenging boundaries, a subject which I will discuss in more detail shortly.

Self-authoring occurs through existing cultural forms. According to Bakhtin, we use language to author the world and to author ourselves into it. This process of authoring tends to be collective in nature, given that reality must be constructed using preexisting, shared materials. In other words, an individual who authors local conflicts by applying words to contentious others also engaged in the struggle must draw upon the “languages, dialects, genres, and words of others to which she has been exposed” (Holland & Lave, 2001, pp. 10-11). Thus, self-authoring occurs through existing cultural forms whose authors are collective in nature, drawing the discussion away from Western notions of the “individual” and closer to Indigenous epistemological notions of the “I within the we.”

Individuals also construct their intimate selves in a dialogical manner framed by struggles over and about differences between the self and others. These struggles are largely about the power of translocal institutions and the ideological content of widely circulating discourses. Self-identification is formed through dialogical encounters with powerful individuals and powerful structures operating within and beyond the contentious local practice. In this case, those powerful individuals and structures might include university professors, program staff, the structure of the school counseling

program, tribal governments, and state and federal offices of Indian education. Through repeated interactions with such individuals and institutions, their cultural forms and linguistic practices begin to construct the participants in this study as well as their powerful interlocutors. Therefore, the boundaries between self and other are not as clearly defined as we would like to believe. Holland and Lave assert that “the self is an orchestration of the practices of others” (2001, p. 15); an orchestration that is constantly in the process of being rearranged within the venue of contentious local practice. This orchestration and the process of mediation between self and others within contentious local practice is influenced by and takes place within the context of enduring struggles. In the case of American Indians engaged in struggle with dominant educational institutions, enduring struggles over sovereignty and who has the power to define what counts as knowledge and “success” in particular contexts provide the backdrop for contentious local struggles that, in this instance, play out in university classrooms. Bakhtin’s concepts of dialogism, self-authoring, the sociality of the intimate self, and the boundaries between self and other allow for a more nuanced understanding of the formation of individual subjectivities within local contentious practice and in relation to more enduring conflicts. Drawing on existing linguistic and cultural resources which stem from historically-influenced structures and processes, individual subjectivities become dialogic.

As a theoretical tool, Holland and Lave’s (2001) concept of history in person and Bakhtin’s work around dialogism provide a theoretical framework for how individuals, through practice, shape their multiple identities at the same time they are being influenced and molded by structural forces beyond their control. The American Indian

students in this study must negotiate this complex terrain daily in their classes and the associated homework assignments. At the same time, they attempt to infuse their identities as American Indians into the classroom and push institutional structures to be more accommodating, the institutional structures push back, requesting a different type of classroom participation behavior or challenging their presence at the institution, for example.

Summary

By combining an Indigenous epistemological framework with a focus on the formation of multiple subjectivities within contentious local practices and related to enduring struggles around both Indian education in the United States and the survival of sovereign Indian nations, I hope to draw out the similarities as well as the range and variation in the experiences of the participants in this study. Methodologically I also hope that such a theoretical framework allows me to avoid overgeneralizing or reinscribing binaries between Western and Indigenous ways of knowing and being. I also hope that such a hybrid framework creates the space for a multivocalic presentation and analysis of data, where my stance as a White, female researcher is recognized and accounted for while the voices of participants are emphasized and prioritized.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

In the previous two chapters, I provided historical background on interactions between American Indians and the U.S. government, emphasizing the closely intertwined nature of federal policy and educational practices. I also outlined the existing literature on American Indians and education, noting that while American Indians are the most studied group in K-12 education, they are the least studied group in higher education (Brayboy & Castagno, 2006; Deyhle & Swisher, 1997). I then connected these larger political, educational, and research issues to a theoretical framework rooted in Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies, as well as in practice theories of identity formation. Finally, I illustrated where gaps exist in the current research and discussed how this study speaks to those gaps. In this chapter, I will make yet another set of connections by outlining my own research questions in more detail and providing the rationale for why I have chosen to address those questions in the ways that I have chosen to do so. Once I have outlined the research questions and the ways in which they have shifted over time, I will also address access to and selection of the research site and participants; methods of data collection, management and analysis; and the limitations of this study.

Research Questions

When I began this study more than a year ago, I had already spent a year as a research assistant for the American Indian Teacher Training Program at Western University. Building upon my interactions with the American Indian students that I tutored and informally mentored, the research questions I developed were focused specifically on the identity construction of American Indian preservice teachers through classroom participation. The central question I sought to address was, “What do choices regarding oral participation in class reveal about the ways that American Indian students in the higher education context negotiate their multiple identities as university students, members of Indigenous communities, and preservice teachers?” In order to systematically address the larger research question, I initially broke it down into a series of subquestions that I hoped to answer through data collection. They were:

1. What choices do American Indian students make with regard to participating orally in class? How do students describe or explain their choices to participate (or not) in certain classroom interactions? What advantages and costs are associated with these choices, according to the students?
2. How do their instructors respond to the choices made by the American Indian students to engage or not engage orally in class?
3. What is the relationship between choices made by American Indian students about whether and how to participate in class and their individual identity construction within this particular educational and local context? What kinds of identities are presented in class, out of class, and during discussions with the researcher about the choices made regarding oral participation in class?

During my pilot study in the summer of 2005, I began collecting data to address these questions and realized that the students I was observing and informally interviewing were actually addressing and being addressed by their fellow students and professors about much larger questions regarding what it means to be an Indigenous person in the twenty-first century. That is, classroom participation was only one arena in which identity struggles played themselves out and the multiple arenas were too interconnected to isolate them from one another. Thus, my questions evolved to address classroom participation and interactional issues in relation to larger ontological and epistemological issues, as well as classroom participation and interactional issues as part of larger debates over ontologies and epistemologies. Logistical constraints such as access to participants, university classrooms, and the ability to record classroom discourse also contributed to the shift in my research questions and will be addressed in more detail later in this chapter.

When I began the more in-depth study, the findings of which are presented here, I found myself working with six American Indian graduate students in a school counseling program rather than undergraduate students in a teacher certification program. Over the course of the semester I narrowed that group of six students to focus on the experiences of three students, whom you will meet in more detail in the following chapter. I chose the three participants because of their diverse life experiences and the range and variation in how they self-identify as American Indians, graduate students, and future school counselors as well as in how they are identified by others. After a few months, my central interests became: What does it mean to be simultaneously an Indigenous person, a graduate student, and a future school counselor of Native students in the twenty-first

century? When and where are these identities in tension and how do individuals respond to these tensions? Finally, how are these identities both constructed within local contentious practice and influenced by historical policies toward American Indians, legacies of colonialism, imperialism and racism, and Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies? In order to address these questions, I utilized a variety of research methods to collect and analyze data. In the sections that follow I will address how I came to work with the six participants in this study as well as my rationale for employing particular methods of data collection and analysis.

Negotiating Access to the Research Site and Selecting Participants

As I mentioned above, when I began this study more than a year ago I was a third year graduate student as well as an employee at Western University, positions which I continued to hold throughout the course of this study. Thus, I feel that I am well acquainted with the general character of Western University—its faculty, staff, students, programs, and even the physical space the campus occupies. I began taking courses in the College of Education in June 2003 and, in August of 2004, I was hired as a research assistant by the American Indian Teacher Training Program. Combined with the fact that the AITTP is the only program of its kind in the state, my status as an “insider” (Brayboy & Deyhle, 2000) at Western University helped facilitate access to the participants, their professors, and other relevant institutional actors, making site selection relatively easy. However, I was and continue to be very much an “outsider” within American Indian communities. While I believe students saw me as an ally, my positionality as a White female researcher certainly influenced what, when, how, and why the participants chose

to reveal or conceal particular aspects of their experiences. Keeping my “insider-outsider” status in mind, I will begin by discussing how I gained access to the American Indian student participants and then I will discuss how I gained access to their professors in the counseling program and to the staff of the American Indian Teacher Training Program.

In many ways, my data collection for this study began the moment I was hired by the American Indian Teacher Training Program at Western University. My job with the AITTP involved working as a research assistant, but also acting as an advocate, confidante, unofficial mentor, and sometimes tutor for the American Indian students enrolled in the program. These multiple roles allowed for ample participant observation in both informal and official contexts. Prior to the beginning of this study I shared an office with another graduate student (the writing tutor for the program and a fellow research assistant), as well as the office photocopier, fax machine, paper cutter, water cooler, refrigerator, and microwave. The result was that my office was a relatively social place. Students came to the office for help with homework or just to have a quiet place to eat lunch and kill time between classes. They came most frequently when they had papers due: some came with their laptops, printers, and mega-gulp soda cups, and set up shop for hours at a time. When I began collecting data I had been developing relationships with AITTP students in the first and second cohorts and the program staff for a period of one year. For this study I focused on the third cohort, whose members arrived at the Western University in May 2005.

Given my job as a research assistant for the AITTP, I had an easier time negotiating access to participants and establishing rapport with them than if I were a

complete outsider to the program and to the university. I also believe that the relationships I had established with some members of the first and second cohorts facilitated access to participants from the third cohort because other American Indian students believed that I was trustworthy and willing to reciprocate by helping them with homework or other issues that arose in the process of navigating the university system. I met the twelve members of the third cohort in May 2005 when they arrived at Western University for a program orientation and summer coursework. I attended the orientation activities in my capacity as a research assistant and also conducted participant observation in an undergraduate level American Indian Experience course in which all members of the third cohort, regardless of whether they were graduate and undergraduate students, were enrolled. I used my participant observation in the course as a sort of “pilot study” to test the relevance of my research questions and to begin to identify students with whom I would be interested in conducting further research.

In order to qualify for participation in this study, participants had to be enrolled in the third cohort of the AITTP, which required that they be college juniors or seniors studying education or graduate students seeking master’s degrees in educational psychology, that they be academically competitive (in the opinion of the AITTP acceptance committee), and that they began taking classes toward their current degree sometime between January and June 2005, depending on the individual. All of the students were working toward completing their prerequisites while participating in my study. Beyond these basic qualifications, I based my selection of participants on their interest in my study and willingness to participate, as well as a desire for a heterogeneous mix of American Indian participants. I selected the participants in this study with an eye

toward a mix of men and women, variation in age, variation in tribal affiliation, and a desire for individuals with diverse lived experiences.

During the summer semester while I was attending the American Indian Experience course as an observer, the AITTP hosted a barbecue for American Indian students in the teacher training program and their families. At that event I approached a number of students about participating in my research. Later I followed up with an email that outlined the purpose of the study, what would be expected of participants in the study in terms of time commitment, and the potential benefits of the study to the AITTP program staff and individual students. The program coordinator for the third cohort also sent out an email officially announcing and supporting my study because of its potential programmatic benefits. Following the distribution of both emails, I specifically approached three students² about their participation in this study. I provided them with an informed consent form (see Appendix A) that, in keeping with the Institutional Review Board template, outlined the study, the methods of data collection, and the potential costs and benefits of the study. The consent form also addressed the fact that participants could withdraw from the study at any point in time without any cost to them and stated that not all methods of data collection would be used with all participants. Together we verbally discussed what participation in the study would entail and reviewed the consent form.

Once I had consent from the three students whose experiences are explored in this study, I approached several of their professors via email about observing classes. In my

² My IRB approval covered my ability to observe all six students in the classroom, but because I was only observing the other three American Indian graduate students while they were engaged in ordinary classroom behavior in order to provide context, my observations of them did not require informed consent.

email, I again provided a brief description of the study and explained its potential benefits to AITTP and individual students, as well as to the counseling program. Of the three professors I contacted, only one allowed me to observe her course. She was comfortable with my presence in the classroom, later allowing me to interview her for the study, and periodically asking questions about my research in relation to her observations about individual students. As a result, I observed the participants in a Counseling Theories and Procedures course, which met once a week for three hours. The course is considered a foundational course for students in the counseling program, so it was a large class with approximately thirty-five students enrolled. When I attended class, I would sit near an individual participant or group of participants, but I remained predominantly a silent observer in the classroom. I took field notes and participated only when questioned by other students in the course or when the professor requested that I do so. I also used my time in the classroom as a “silent observer” and the social breaks as an opportunity to further develop my relationship with the participants and their professor.

The professor whose class I observed was a professor from whom I took a course in developmental psychology. As a result, some degree of rapport had already been established between us and she allowed me into her classroom without raising any concerns. Although the observation of routine classroom activities is exempt from IRB, the professor could have made it very difficult for me to observe her class. Instead, she was helpful in sharing her expectations around assignments and classroom participation and consented to being interviewed. I chose to interview her because she was a faculty member in the school counseling program, she was teaching all of the American Indian students who participated in this study, and she allowed me access to her classroom. In

order to avoid any conflicts of interest, I waited until the conclusion of the fall semester to interview her regarding her teaching practices and her expectations for the graduate students enrolled in the school counseling program. Again, I believe that my status as a community “insider” within the College of Education facilitated the development of this relationship.

Finally, even though I did not conduct formal interviews with members of the AITTP staff, I talked with them informally on numerous occasions over the time of data collection as a research assistant and took copious fieldnotes on these occasions. Because access to AITTP program staff was something that was already in place due to my employment, and because many of our staff meetings addressed questions about our programmatic identity, I was able to obtain the perspective of individual staff members when I thought it would complement the data I was collecting in the classroom or in interviews with the participants. While I attempt to make programmatic goals explicit in Chapter V, I also recognize that one of the limitations of this study is that my perspective is, in many ways, caught up in my positionality as an employee of the program with a vested interest in its success.

This study focuses on data collected predominantly from participant observation in the university context and interview data in which the participants reflect on their experiences at the university. In Chapter IV, I describe and provide biographical information on the three students who agreed to participate in this study in greater detail. As for the professor and AITTP program staff, their comments are interspersed throughout the text as relevant but I have chosen to be purposefully vague in order to protect their identities. In the following section, I will outline the methods of data

collection that I employed and my rationale for doing so.

Initial Data Collection: Document Collection, Participant Observation,
and Field Notes

In an attempt to highlight students' "voices" and perspectives, I employed a variety of data collection methods, including document collection, participant observation and field notes, formal and informal interviews, and a focus group. My data collection began in earnest in the spring of 2005 when I began collecting documents related to the American Indian Teacher Training Program, including graduation announcements, program recruitment brochures, and relevant articles that appeared in the student newspaper. Throughout the study I continued to collect documents related to the goals of AITTP, how the program represented itself, and how others perceived the program. I also collected documents related to the counseling program, including a program overview and the various handouts about course requirements that were available in the departmental office or on the website. At a more participant-centered level I collected course syllabi, assignment descriptions, and handouts from the American Indian Experience course and the Counseling Theories and Procedures course in the school counseling program as a way of making explicit some of the implicit expectations or requirements of the school counseling program, the AITTP, and the College of Education generally. These documents gave me a sense of how the programs officially sought to define themselves and how others responded to those definitions. Finally, I collected academic and personal documents related to each of the participants, including examples of coursework and, in one case, information contained in an online blog devoted to the student's daily life. I employed document collection primarily as a means of gaining

context and being able to understand how various constituencies officially or publicly represented themselves.

As I was continuing to collect documents in the summer of 2005 I also began my participant observation. I observed an American Indian Experience course, taught by an American Indian instructor, in which all twelve members (graduates and undergraduates) of the third cohort of the AITTP were enrolled and kept field notes about the topics covered in the course, where students sat, when students chose to participate, when they were particularly silent, and their informal reflections on the course. As I reviewed those field notes I developed a sense of which students I wanted to approach about participating in this study, a process which I have described above, as well as a more nuanced conception of the salient aspects of students' schooling experiences in relation to issues of identity presentation and coconstruction through practice.

In the fall of 2005, I continued conducting participant observation this time focusing on the six American Indian graduate students in the school counseling program that I had approached. I chose to focus on these six students, who were all of the AITTP graduate students enrolled in the school counseling program, because the group fulfilled my desire for a mix of genders (three male students, three female students), ages (22-40-something), and lived experiences. These six students also took all of the same courses, which allowed me to maximize the time I spent observing courses. I observed students in a Counseling Theories and Procedures course, which met once a week for a three-hour period. I kept a notebook of observations during the class and then typed up my extended field notes as soon thereafter as possible. In the process of expanding my field notes I conducted a preliminary analysis of data, coding for themes that emerged across the data,

and made notes, if I had not already done so, about which aspects of my observations I wanted to follow-up with formal or informal interviews. Over the course of the fall semester, I continued this cyclical process of observing participants, writing field notes, and revising my research questions and interview protocol. Out of this process and the methods I employed during these initial phases of data collection emerged an understanding of the complicated, sometimes contested ways in which participants interacted with one another, with their professor, and with the Institution.

Interview and Focus Group Research

Utilizing the notes that emerged from the coding of my field notes during the summer semester and the beginning of the fall semester, I refined my interview protocol and conducted initial interviews with the three students whose experiences appear here. In the initial formal interviews, conducted in the middle of October, about halfway through the semester, I sought to obtain basic life and schooling histories from the participants and to better understand how and why they chose to participate or not participate in class discussions and small group activities by asking questions that were specifically about participation but also by asking questions about other study skills such as note taking or test preparation strategies. The interviews (see Appendices B and C) were semistructured in nature, meaning that I had a protocol but that I largely allowed the participants to guide the interviews in order to get a sense of what elements of their experiences they thought were salient. For example, as a result of this format, all three of the participants addressed issues of what it would mean to be a school counselor in an American Indian community even though this was not a topic that I had asked them about

directly or expected to cover. This format was also intended to proactively address the concerns of Indigenous communities, Indigenous researchers, the participants, and myself about the problematic role of non-Indigenous researchers working with Indigenous individuals and communities (Deloria, 1969/1988; Lomawaima, 2000; Smith, 1999; Whitt, 1998). As Battiste and Henderson (2000) have observed:

It is vital that Indigenous peoples have direct input into developing and defining research practices and projects related to them. To act otherwise is to repeat a familiar pattern of decisions being made for Indigenous peoples by those who presume to know what is best for them (p. 132).

Utilizing a semistructured format allowed me to, at least partially, address these concerns by both setting up the interviews as an opportunity to tell stories rather than as an interrogation and by allowing participants, to some degree, to guide what we discussed. For example, the first question I asked students during our initial interview was not framed as a question, but as a request. I asked the participants to tell me about their experiences with school up to this point. This allowed the participants to determine which aspects of their experiences were salient and which were not. In this vein I also allowed students to select the location of our interviews. All three participants chose to be interviewed in my office or a vacant office at the American Indian Teacher Training Program.

All of the initial interviews lasted between forty-five and ninety minutes. They were audio-recorded and later transcribed in order to preserve an accurate representation of the conversations and provide for close analysis at a later date. I also wrote field notes immediately following each interview in which I outlined my impressions of how the interview had gone and made initial connections between the data, the research questions, and existing literature. Following Ochs (1979), I view the process of transcribing the

interviews as a level of analysis in that I decided how to represent the spoken words in written form. This process was influenced by my perspective as a White, female, “Standard English” speaker with particular ontologies and epistemologies, as well as a research agenda, that shaped my notions of how ideas should be organized on the page. Taking into account the ways in which my ontological and epistemological lenses might have influenced the transcription and representation of interview data on paper, I have attempted to compensate by triangulating data from multiple sources including document collection, participant observations over the course of two semesters (summer and fall), field notes, and data from semistructured audio-recorded interviews and informal interviews that were not recorded.

I followed similar processes of data collection and analysis when I conducted follow-up interviews (see Appendix C) with the participants during the spring semester. In these interviews, I focused more specifically on the particular elements of identity construction (Indigenous person, graduate student, future school counselor) that each individual was struggling with and in relation to particular skills such as classroom participation, note taking, or studying for a test. Finally, when I felt that I had an idea of how I wanted to represent the participants’ experiences, I invited them to participate in a focus group where they had the opportunity to dialog with one another and to respond to my analysis and choices of categories and labels. Although the focus group conversation was rich and informative, it is important to mention that one of the students, Steve, was not present in spite of my efforts to include him. I believe that it is important to highlight this difficulty as a way of acknowledging that, while I attempted to engage participants in a sensitive and culturally-appropriate manner which took into account their perspectives,

there are unanticipated constraints associated with doing so.

The dialog that did occur in the focus group, however, leads me to believe that much of my analysis and interpretation of data is robust, supported well by recurring themes and across the data, and well-substantiated by students' comments. For example, when I asked Sara and Ethan to help me theorize their experiences in relation to Brayboy's (1999, 2004a) notion of students as simultaneously "good Indians" and "good students," they did not reject the framework but rather illustrated the greater complexity of their own experiences, helping to nuance the theoretical framework. While the fact that I brought theoretical categories into the focus group may be seen as a limitation, I was concerned that the participants would be intimidated by the notion of theorizing and I wanted them to have a concrete framework to draw from or reject as they saw fit. Ultimately their insights proved invaluable to me in delineating the range and variation in their experiences, allowing me to move closer to the "hybridized, multidirectional, and multigeneric" (Pulitano, 2003, p. 102) analysis of data that I hoped for. By collecting data from a variety of sources in a variety of contexts and analyzing these data separately as well as in relation to one another, I believe that I am able to address the revised research questions laid out earlier in this chapter in a manner that illuminates rather than obfuscates nuance and complexity. For instance, it is significant that I analyze data on the levels of intergroup relationships, policy struggles, programmatic and communal structures, local practices, and individual identity negotiation and then connect these data to one another and to historical policies and practices.

I have used multiple methods of data collection and analysis, triangulating data in order to arrive at a more complicated understanding of the relationship between

participants' identities, moments of contentious local practice and enduring policy struggles. Document collection (program descriptions, course syllabi, invitations to social events and official ceremonies) and analysis provided me with a broad framework for understanding the lives of participants within the university context. Participant observation allowed me to provide context and gave me an opportunity to see students interacting in classrooms in situations where I was not an interlocutor. Through the process of writing field notes, I conducted preliminary data analysis and was able to see patterns emerging that I wanted to follow-up on. Formal and informal interviews gave me the opportunity to follow-up on emerging themes, provided context, and allowed me to understand the participants' perspectives on particular actions or interactions that I observed or that they relayed to me. Informal interviews where students raised issues that were of importance or concern for them were particularly helpful in confirming or challenging my thinking and my positionality in relation to the research project and the data. The transcription of formal interviews also served as a level of analysis and helped me to again refine my understanding of the study's central themes and potential implications. Finally, conducting a focus group allowed me to conduct a final "member check" with the participants and gave us an opportunity to dialog around the central themes that emerged.

Researcher Role and Limitations of This Study

In the previous sections of this chapter, I addressed the ways in which I collected data from different sources and analyzed data in multiple ways in order to preserve the richness of participant "voice" and to mitigate the presence of my own "voice."

However, this is never entirely possible and this study, like all studies, has its particular limitations. First and foremost, my positionality as a White, female researcher and member of the AITTP staff inquiring into the lives of American Indian students enrolled in the program limits the scope of this study. Taken together, the data presented in the following chapters ultimately represent one historically situated, ideologically invested attempt at sense-making, and that is my own. As Linda Smith (1999) argues, “The idea of contested stories and multiple discourses about the past, by different communities, is closely linked to the politics of everyday contemporary Indigenous life” (p. 33). That is, my own sense-making, out of which the narrative presented here grew, is influenced by the historical legacies of colonialism, imperialism, and racism that continue to shape the lived experiences of Indigenous individuals and especially the relationship between American Indians and the U.S. government, as embodied by its White citizens and their actions. In particular, as a White researcher, I cannot entirely escape the lens of a “colonizer” or the ways in which the participants presumably viewed me as such. This historically-rooted and ever present power dynamic between the participants and myself cannot be ignored. While at no time did I have any influence over the participants’ academic standing or their scholarships, I was both a staff member of a program in which they were students and someone who was and continues to be well-served by a White Supremacist system that is set up to benefit people who look and think like me. Thus, while a multitude of ontologies, epistemologies, and stories influence these data and my analysis of them, it remains true that the academy values a particular perspective on knowledge in which I am somewhat complicit by virtue of my positionality as a White researcher and successful student in the academy. Epistemologically, it is especially

worth emphasizing the differing perspectives on what counts as knowledge and how such knowledge is produced and transmitted in relation to the notion of research. Marker (2004) writes that:

Research is a slippery term in this cross-cultural context. The conventional academic use of the word refers to a systematic approach to gaining knowledge; the *researcher* relentlessly searches for facts or data. Unrelated data or irrelevant data are disregarded, and the emphasis is usually on a narrow kind of questioning, compartmentalizing, and specializing knowledge. Although Indigenous methods of gaining knowledge can also be systematic, they usually involve connecting diverse points of reference that defy disciplinary or methodological boundaries and draw on an individual's relationships to people, animals, the landscape, and an oral tradition framing a time-space arrangement. ... This is not to say that Indigenous research is not empirical, only that it is not empirical toward ends that are isolated from the concerns of community; a community made real by the stories from ancestors who established a sustainable presence on the land (p. 105).

The result of such differing research processes is that different types of knowledge are produced and valued. While Marker (2004) mentions stories as a vehicle for knowledge transmission in Indigenous communities, Western-oriented research efforts tend to transmit knowledge through “scholarly” publications or presentations (Archibald, 1990; Battiste, 2002). Stories in Indigenous communities are expected to change depending on who is telling the story, who is listening to the story, and a number of other contextual factors (Archibald, 1990; Basso, 2000; Medicine, 2001). Multiple, sometimes contradictory or contested, versions of a story are expected and valued. In contrast, “scholarly” publications or presentations are expected to distill research findings into a single truth (or something that resembles a single version of the truth) and those that do not are often considered the result of “messy” or “inadequate” research (Marker, 2004). In my presentation and analysis of data, I have tried to maintain the multiple, contested, and contradictory voices and opinions of the three graduate students enrolled in a school counseling program by way of the American Indian Teacher Training Program whose

experiences are at the heart of this study. At the same time, I recognize that the voices, opinions, and experiences included in this study represent a particular image of the participants and their experiences as filtered through my own historically situated, ideologically invested perspective as a White, female researcher utilizing the methodological and theoretical lenses available to me in order to: 1) complete the requirements of a master's degree and 2) to attempt to complicate and alter the ways in which American Indians are perceived and treated within the academy.

In addition to my own positionality, I have chosen to analyze the experiences of three very different American Indian individuals whose perspectives are also historically-situated (see Chapter IV for further discussion of this point) and ideologically invested in the survival of their communities and in their own journeys through the school counseling program and the AITTP. I do not claim to present a representative sample. Nor do I claim that the findings of this study are generalizable. Rather, these data emphasize the coconstructed, complex, and contested nature of identity. As individual case studies taken together they demonstrate that there are multiple ways to be Indian and challenge claims to a singular American Indian experience or identity (Deloria quoted in Warrior, 1995). In this complexity, as well as in the myriad of ways in which the participants resolve the inherent tensions of "living in two worlds" (Henze & Vanett, 1993) or at the margins for themselves, lie valuable lessons about what institutions of higher education, and in particular, school counseling programs might do in order to better serve Native students and the communities to which they will return. For example, programs serving Native students within the higher education context might move beyond the perceived dichotomy between Western and Indigenous ways of knowing and

find ways to incorporate the two within a new framework. Similarly, in the writing of this document I have struggled to move beyond these dichotomous approaches because the language available to talk about such phenomena in the English language is both limited and determined by power brokers within the academy. Marker (2004) remarks that:

One of the central problems for Indigenous intellectuals is that words—in English—are presently owned by an academic culture that has some consensus on the legitimate definition of these terms and activities. Indigenous scholars must either invent new words and then struggle upstream against the prevailing current to wedge them into the academic lexicon, or expand the meaning of conventional terms to include Indigenous perspective. This is essentially seizing a word and saying “this is what *we* mean when we say *science*, or *epistemology*, or *respectful methodology*” (p. 103).

Ultimately, I believe that I have found creative ways to seize words and metaphors in order to represent the multifaceted lives of the participants. However, because my positionality as a White, female researcher largely locates me as within (and benefiting from) the power structures of the academy (which are rooted in White Supremacy and colonialist and imperialist assumptions about the “Other”), there are limitations and omissions that cannot be mitigated in spite of the fact that a large component of what I am drawing on in my theoretical framework and representing in the data analysis that follows are the voices and perspectives of Indigenous graduate students within the academy.

In order to better understand my own positionality and the ways in which it might influence my own sense-making as well as my relationships with the participants, I spent the better part of a year interacting with American Indian students and staff members as an employee of the American Indian Teacher Training Program before I proposed this study. That period of time allowed me to develop a preliminary

understanding of ways of communicating that are culturally appropriate or inappropriate to particular American Indian communities or individuals. I began the ongoing process of learning how to ask questions in the less direct way preferred by some of the participants and, more importantly, I began the ongoing process of learning how to listen carefully and interrupt less. In the course of the study, I have learned a great deal more. For example, I conducted all of my individual interviews with the participants sitting across from me at either a square or a round table. In retrospect, at least when interviewing Ethan and Steve, I should have sat on the same side of the table that they were sitting on because this would have been more in keeping with community interactional patterns and their own preferences around making eye contact.

Another component of my preparation involved self-reflection on and awareness of the ways of being and knowing that I bring to the study, which are different from those that the participants bring to the study. My awareness of my own ways of being and knowing came largely from interacting with individuals who did not share those ontologies and epistemologies. Mentors, colleagues at AITTP, and the participants all helped me to identify my own perspective on how the world is and should be organized and my role within that space. For example, early in the research process, one of my mentors reminded me that my eagerness to explore the world through talk (and my tendency to interrupt) might silence or distance my participants. As a result, I attempted to consciously monitor my speech patterns and worked hard to improve my ability to listen. This process is ongoing. I have also learned the importance of reflecting on my own subjectivities and my own (often unconscious) strategies that I am (as we all are) constantly employing to manage subjectivities. Finally, the last and perhaps most

important part of my preparation does not involve skills that I learned but rather the relationships that I developed with people, particularly American Indian students and staff members associated with the AITTP. When I began the study in earnest, I had already begun to develop a relationship with one of the participants (Ethan). In an interview, he told me that the fact that we had developed a relationship of trust and understanding over the course of a one-year period prior to the beginning of this study was essential to his willingness to serve as an informant. He said, “if you met someone that came from my reservation compared to me, then the chances of you talking to them and getting the same information out of them as you would me would be very hard to do. They look at someone from a different culture or society as not understanding them.” In this sense, the year I spent preparing to begin this study and developing relationships allowed me to receive knowledge that I would not have been privy to if Ethan and I had not already developed a relationship of trust and mutual respect. However, it is important for me to also acknowledge that our relationship of trust and mutual respect was (and continues to be) inherently constrained by the nature of our relationship (staff member/student; researcher/researched) and power dynamic between us, as well as by a legacy of mistrust between American Indians and Whites. Let me also be clear that the negotiation of our relationship and its terms, like my relationship to all of the participants, is ongoing. Seeking understanding and degrees of trust across difference are ongoing processes and I still have learning to do.

Summary

In this chapter, I outlined my methods for collecting and analyzing data and I suggested that, while my historically situated, ideologically laden voice as the researcher is always present, there is also a central place for students' voices (albeit represented through my perspective as narrator of their stories), as they theorize their own lives and experiences. As Linda Smith (1999) argues, writing theory may be an intimidating prospect for Indigenous students because of how their ways of being and knowing have been historically silenced through practices of colonization and racism in the academy.

She writes:

Having been immersed in the Western Academy which claims theory as thoroughly Western, which has constructed all the rules by which the indigenous world has been theorized, indigenous voices have been overwhelmingly silenced. The act, let alone the art and science, of theorizing our own existence and realities is not something which many indigenous people assume is possible (Smith, 1999, p. 29).

In this study, I employ the work of Indigenous scholars (see Chapter II) and the perspectives of the Indigenous participants in this study (who powerfully and eloquently theorize their own lived experiences) in order to challenge prevalent conceptions of theory as existing in a dichotomous relationship with the stories of Native peoples (for more on this, see Chapter VII). In Chapter IV, you will meet the participants and I will introduce how they theorize their own existence and how it is that they describe the places where they found themselves when I met them.

CHAPTER IV

“IF YOU WANT TO KNOW WHO I AM...ASK.” ADDRESSING AND ANSWERING QUESTIONS OF AMERICAN INDIAN IDENTITY IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

In Chapters I and III, I provided context for the American Indian Teacher Training Program at Western University, and the school counseling program, as well as outlined how participants were selected for this study. In this chapter, I utilize the history in person framework discussed in Chapter II to connect American Indian policy and educational history to the lived experiences and perspectives of the three individuals who participated in this study. In order to address the relationship between historical policies and lived experiences in local contexts, I briefly describe where the participants are from and provide basic biographical information, including age, gender, and race. I also incorporate details of participants’ educational histories, their cultural knowledge, and their relationships with others (students, family members, community) as relevant. Taken together, these data attempt to define the range and variation in what it means to be an Indigenous person to the students in this study (and those around them at the university) and provide further context for the events and interactions detailed more fully in Chapters V and VI. This context informs my analysis, as well as the ways in which students are thinking about their own experiences at the university and making connections between

what it means to be an Indigenous person, a graduate student, and a future school counselor for themselves and their peers in the teacher training program.

Sara

Sara is a multiracial young woman in her early twenties who grew up in the Pacific Northwest, but identifies with a Western tribe although she is not an enrolled member. She struggles with what it means to inhabit a liminal position in society. Sara's mother is White and her father is an American Indian affiliated with three different tribes who did not highlight the Indigenous aspects of his identity as something that made him special or distinguished him from other people in their predominantly White community when Sara was growing up. She learned most of what she knew about her culture from her paternal grandmother. Her family also made frequent weekend trips to reservations near their home, and Sara participated in an extracurricular Native American class that kept her connected to a small, local community of Native people. At school, however, Sara was often the only Native student in her class and one of a handful of Native students at her elementary, middle, and high schools. She often felt singled out or embarrassed by her status as a Native American. In elementary school, Sara remembers being pulled out of class for "Indian education."

I'd go into this room with this Native person and I, from what I remember, colored pictures and drew...I mean, I feel like they were trying to do this, you know, keep my culture important to me. But it wasn't specifically my [tribal association] culture... And I can see why [the teachers and the administration] liked it, what they were trying to do, but it was kind of embarrassing leaving class 'cause everyone was like [making fun of me]. You know, like, "Sara it's time for Indian education," and all the kids are like, "oh ..." It was kind of embarrassing.

For Sara, being identified as a Native student was something she tried to avoid at school.

Because Sara has olive skin (as opposed to the darker brown skin associated with popular representations of “Indians”), she was “treated like everybody else” in school and her identity as a Native student remained largely invisible to her friends and to school personnel until she was pulled out for “Indian Education”. When others ascribed a Native identity to Sara by pulling her out of class for Indian education or requiring her to meet with the Indian guidance counselor in high school, she remembers being embarrassed or uncomfortable because making her identity as a Native person visible set her up for other students to make fun of her and call her names. At the same time, she recognized the importance of the support services provided to Native students who were struggling academically or socially. Emphasizing the importance of treating students as individuals as well as group members, Sara “did really well in school” and preferred to be treated “like everybody else.” Not until Sara went to college did she begin to identify more positively with her identity as a Native person. She says:

I went to a really liberal college... That’s when I became part of the ethnic student center and that’s where I started to really, like, hey, I can be proud of knowing I’m [tribal affiliation] even though I’m three different things ’cause that was always an issue of am I enough Indian to be, you know, part of the group. Most people there [at college] really accepted me and said, you know, it doesn’t matter if you are full-blood or whatnot... join in. And so I started taking classes about a whole bunch of different cultures and ethnicities and learned tons more about my own.

As Sara learned more about her own culture and began to be proud of her identity as a Native person, she also became more conscious of the ways in which other people questioned her identity as a Native person based on her looks. During this time, Sara wrote a poem entitled “Lessons” about her multiracial identity. The poem reads:

Challenge me, label me, it’s what you do best.

Categorize me, does that comfort you
My blood, my body is mine and let me decide who I am

No lies, no prize, just truth
 My skin is not a book...don't judge me by my cover

It's not up to you anymore
 I'm not asking your permission
 I'm not asking for your advice
 I know who I am, where I belong, and who I claim
 Forget your rules, your standards
 My skin may deceive, but I know where I come from

My blood doesn't lie.

If you want to know who I am
 Ask.

In the poem, Sara makes multiple references to her skin color and blood quantum and a single, more general reference to her body. She uses the poem as a forum for responding to individuals questioning her racial and ethnic identities and makes a strong statement that it is up to her to define herself (what Owens (2001) would call “managed exoticism”). In other words, while Sara is aware of the identities others ascribe to her, she finds ways to traverse, subvert, or appropriate those identities. For example, Sara also had a friend write the poem on her back and then photograph her with the words literally inscribed on her body. The picture is posted on Sara's blog and provides her with one avenue of managing her own exoticism (Owens, 2001). For Sara, it is empowering because she is not always able to manage her own exoticism.

During the spring semester, Sara entered and won the Miss American Indian Woman Scholar pageant at Western, resulting in questions from her peers in the teacher-training program. The pageant is held annually as a part of the American Indian Awareness week put on by the Intertribal Student Association and the American Indians in Science and Engineering Society at Western University. While the criteria for winning is predominantly based upon a contestant's academic record, each contestant must also

perform a talent. As her talent, Sara recited the poem “Lessons.” Ultimately, when both her talent and her grades were factored into her score, Sara was crowned Miss Indian Woman Scholar. Reflecting on her victory, one of the judges, speaking to Western’s student newspaper said, “I think she has an amazing story to tell...The message that she sends about the Indian culture seems to bring the entire community together.” Not everyone agreed with the judge. After Sara had won the pageant, another member of her cohort in the American Indian Teacher Training Program sent her an email questioning her qualifications. Sara recalled:

I actually had one person from our cohort ask me in an email saying, “So how did you... What are your qualifications for having to win this?” I felt like it was a round about way of saying, like, “How the hell did you win this because, ya know, you are, like, urban Indian as they get. She didn’t come out directly, but I could kind of tell that because then she went into, “Well, in our tribe, you have to be able to do all the dances, you have to be able to sing, you have to know all this and that.” And, I was like, “Okay, could you rub it in a little bit more that I don’t know that, okay?” But, it was a scholar, so it was based on your grades. It was based on what you’ve done for the Native community and what you’re doing now and so I know I was completely qualified for it. But those were the qualifications. Yeah, if they had different qualifications. I mean, I could barely even be entered in it. They had to change the qualifications. At first, they were saying that you had to have a tribal membership card and, I was like, well once again, I can’t do it and everyone wanted me to do it and I was like, well, look at, I can’t do it. And so they changed it just so I could enter it.

In the poem itself, the comments of her cohort-mate after Sara recited the poem for the talent portion of the Miss American Indian Woman Scholar pageant and Sara’s reflection on those comments, questions of identity are salient. What it means to be “Indian” depends on who you ask and in what context. While Sara attempts to use the poem as a forum for responding to individuals questioning her racial and ethnic identities, the recitation of the poem itself then generates commentary from another Indigenous woman seeking to define Sara’s identity for her. Importantly, this dialog also takes place in a

space that is carved out within the institutional confines of Western University. In the extended interaction, Sara's identity is dialogically constituted as she appropriates the words of others (particularly in her references to skin color and blood quantum) and then has her words appropriated by others as they respond. Indeed, what it means to be "Indian" in the twenty-first century, taking into account legacies of colonialism, imperialism, and racism, is a dialogic construct that plays itself out within and in relation to powerful structural confines, including the U.S. educational system. In an interview, Vine Deloria (1995) addresses questions of identity in relation to issues of tradition and culture:

Everyone doesn't have to do everything that the old Indians did in order to have a modern Indian identity. We don't have to have every male in the tribe do the Sun Dance. We need a larger variety of cultural expression today. I don't see why Indians can't be poets, engineers, songwriters or whatever. I don't see why we can't depart from traditional art forms and do new things. Yet both Indians and Whites are horrified when they learn that an Indian is not following rigid forms and styles of the old days. That is nonsense to me but it has great meaning to a lot of people who have never considered the real meaning of cultural change and national development (as cited in Warrior, pp. 93-94).

In this commentary, Deloria articulates a position similar to the one in which Sara finds herself. He recognizes that a "modern Indian identity" is not based solely upon doing "everything that the old Indians did," but acknowledges that, "it has a great meaning to a lot of people." While Sara recognizes that she is an urban Indian who doesn't know about her tribe's traditional culture and finds ways around this aspect of being "Indian," others find it problematic. Thus, Sara is never able to completely define herself. She is in a continual state of being "addressed" and "answering" (Bakhtin, 1935/1981) as a result of the relationship between her current situation as an Indigenous graduate student at Western University and the legacies of colonialism and imperialism best embodied in

U.S. Indian policy.

When Sara reflects on the email exchange around her victory in the Miss American Indian Woman Scholar pageant and several other uncomfortable interactions at Western, she says:

I'm always going to run into people thinking or, you know, are you Native enough? I need to see your credentials. I need to—I just can't walk into a room and take for granted my skin color and [have] people...be like, oh, she's Native and I don't really feel like I need to question her. But people always have to question me to really understand I'm passionate about this because it's always a big question. Even when I came here. It's like, so, what tribe are you from? How much are you? Like, did you grow [up on a reservation]? You know, just tons of questions. But they're not asking the dark brown guy next to me. But they're asking me all these questions.

As a result of her relatively light skin and her “White” ways of interacting, Sara’s identity as an Indigenous woman is often “stopped and frisked” by other American Indians and non-Indians who do not believe she is “Native enough.” At the same time, Sara often has a Native identity ascribed to her as a result of her membership in the American Indian Teacher Training Program or other activities in which she participates. During a focus group during the spring semester, I asked Sara and Ethan to describe what makes someone “Native enough.” They responded:

S: I think there's rules. I think most of the rules aren't talked about, they're just supposedly understood. If Ethan were to walk into our program, or walk into...you wouldn't question his...Are you Indian? 'Cause they look at his skin and he's dark, so of course he's Indian. But, when people look at me, it's like, well, what tribe are you from again? And I get all these series of questions. And I just feel like...people who look like your typical Native American doesn't get those questions, where I feel like I'm constantly under interrogation to make sure all these things are in place before I'm accepted and before I'm allowed in.

K: What are those [questions]?

S: One is, what's your tribe. That's like the number one question, like, do you even know who you are and where is your tribe. And who in your family is Native American? So, first I have to get over the whole ancestor/genealogy thing and then

after that's understood...

E: Then you have to do a dance...

S: Then I gotta a do a dance. No, just kidding. Tell a few stories [laughing]. Um, then I have to, it's kind of like, well how are you involved in the Native community? You didn't grow up on the rez, so how did you come about all of this stuff? So, then I've got to talk about school and going to college and all these things and then, at the time when I talked about this a lot, I was the director of the Native American tutoring program, so I'd talk about that. And then finally, after I was done, it's just like, okay, what else do you need to know? I just felt like the more stuff, the more information I gave, the more authentic I became. It's just exhausting. It's frustrating. I don't feel like everybody has to do that. It's just that my skin color, more than anything, puts me at a disadvantage completely, where I have to go through all these steps. Whereas, if I could just be dark, I feel like it would solve a lot of things.

In this interaction between Sara and Ethan around what it means to be “Indian” and who has the power to define that, several reoccurring themes are present. Sara again brings up skin color as a defining feature of who gets “stopped and frisked” about his or her Indianness and who is allowed to pass through without questioning. She also addresses the issue of tribal affiliation rooted in a specific geographic place when she notes that Indians often question her about knowing who she is and where she comes from, especially since she did not grow up on a reservation. Finally, Sara discusses issues of culture and tradition at Ethan's prompting. Because Sara is the daughter of someone whose tribe was terminated by the federal government and because of her multiracial identity, Sara is particularly conscious of and sensitive to these particular issues. Perhaps as a way of responding to the questions about her credentials, as well as because of her desire to genuinely make a difference in the lives of Indian students and the amount of free time she has as a young, single woman, Sara is extremely involved in the Native American community at Western University and in the surrounding city.

Sara is more involved in the Indigenous community on campus and in the city

than either Ethan or Steve. She is a vice-president for the Intertribal Student Association and, as previously mentioned, was crowned Miss Western University Indian Scholar, an honor decided by her peers and members of the local Native community based on one's demonstrated cultural knowledge as well as one's academic success within the institution. She also works closely with the Center for Ethnic Student Affairs (CESA) on campus and volunteers to visit Native students in the local juvenile detention center. At the university, Sara's closest friends are students in the teacher training program who are considered relatively traditional by other students, including Ethan and a female student who is Native speaker of her tribal language and sometimes misses days of class to go home for ceremonies. In some ways, Sara's visibility as an active participant in the American Indian community on campus is a strategic response to her family history around the termination era. For the U.S. government to dissolve the reservation and the tribal government of her father's reservation was to effectively to deny their existence as human beings and American Indians. Sara's active participation in the Native community on campus is an attempt to reclaim a Native identity for herself and to manage her own degree of exoticism as a light-skinned, urban Indian lacking a spiritual center. Because other students in the teacher training program and other members of the university community questioned Sara, they have gotten to know her and the ways in which she self-identifies as an Indigenous woman outside of constraining classificatory systems. They have also tried to force her to exist within existing classificatory systems that, in many ways, deny Sara's very existence. Thus, for Sara, like for Ethan and Steve, there is a constant tension between the power of institutional structures and actors and her own ability to skillfully navigate, challenge, and even strategically integrate those

structures.

As an undergraduate student, Sara was involved with the ethnic student center and directed a mentoring and tutoring program that worked with Native youth on a nearby reservation. Recognizing that these experiences would add to her credibility, she volunteered on the reservation several times a week, both in the schools and at a state house where youth, under close supervision, could stay on the reservation instead of going to a juvenile detention center. She got to know people there and got a perspective on problems on the reservation, including low educational attainment and poverty. For her undergraduate research project, Sara interviewed “delinquent” youth on the reservation and wrote a thirty-page paper analyzing their experiences. As a result of her experiences working with youth on the reservation, Sara decided to explore the option of going into school counseling. Initially, she had planned to work on the reservation upon graduation, but one of her Native professors encouraged her to apply for the teacher training program. Although she was worried that the fact that she is not an enrolled member of any tribe would hinder her application, Sara applied to the program and was accepted. At the end of her first year of graduate school, Sara finds herself well-connected within the Indigenous community on campus and in the local community. Questions about whether she is “Native enough” have certainly not come to an end, but they have largely been replaced by an appreciation of her commitment to serving her community, a theme that I will return to later. Ethan summarized this perspective when he said:

I like hearing about Sara’s perspective and how things go on in her life and stuff like that. I personally, myself, like, sometimes I think the Mr. Indians and Mrs. Indian people hurt us more than say, someone from Sara’s background. I’ve met some guys that are out there that just think they’re the Indian shit or whatever and

that's just like a mystery to me. I'm just like, man, I don't want to hear that. We're kind of all in the same boat, ya know, we're trying to reach the same goal and why you gotta think you're better or more Indian than someone else. I don't get it. Why can't you just be open-minded and understanding? So, you're not helping by putting down people that are half, like Sara is, or whatever.

At the same Ethan stands up for Sara and wonders why Indians can't be "open-minded and understanding" about one another, he reinscribes the binary between reservation and urban Indians and also employs powerful discourses around blood quantum, which brings me back to my argument that history matters. Sara, Steve, and Ethan are constantly negotiating what it means for each of them individually and as members of the larger Indigenous community at Western University and seeking graduate degrees in school counseling in the twenty-first century. These negotiations are both constrained by institutional structures and historical policies and liberated by students' abilities to "flip the roles" or move in and between two worlds, utilizing their agency to find sites of possibility within and outside of conventions. Ethan's experiences and his narration of them, to which I now turn, provide another example of what this might look like in practice

Ethan

Ethan is a member of a tribe in the Southwestern United States. He is in his early thirties and has several children from a previous marriage. While his ex-wife, their children, and Ethan's brother all live in the city where Western University is located, Ethan lives in graduate student housing near the apartments of several other students in the teacher training program. He knows that he can visit with other students and their families when he needs to "feel connected to other Indians." At various points in time he

has also participated in a study group with other students in the teacher training program and attended meetings of the Intertribal Student Association as ways of staying connected. When he isn't in class, Ethan spends most of his time in his apartment entertaining or studying with friends, at the gym playing basketball, or caring for his children.

Ethan received his bachelor's degree from Western University as a member of the teacher training program and is currently working toward a master's degree in educational psychology and licensure as a school counselor. In the focus group and individual interviews, Ethan indicated that his desire to be involved in the education of American Indian youth grew out of his own difficult experiences with schooling and life as a child. When I ask Ethan what school was like for him when he was younger, he comments:

It seemed like it was a big run-around because of financial things and parents. I mean, there were so many outside things going on that the inside of the school...I guess I felt so lost from...just because of things that were happening at home. I liked school, I liked going, but I felt like I was lost as a little kid.

As a child, Ethan spent much of his time in the care of his grandparents or boarding schools while his parents struggled with their own problems. He attended a public school early on, went to a couple of BIA boarding schools, and then attended a BIA day school on the reservation. At all of the schools he attended, he remembers the teachers making fun of Indian students and he says, "I was sitting in the very corner and that's just how it was." Ethan's feeling of being "lost" because of what was happening outside of school was not helped by what was happening inside of school, where he was further marginalized for being Indian. Feeling "lost" for Ethan is about the marginalization that he personally experienced, but is also related to a collective experience of

marginalization and oppression, which especially plays itself out in Ethan's tribe's experiences with relocation to a reservation in another part of the country, well-removed from their traditional homeland. While his tribe's current location has become a home of sorts and has developed its own spiritual center as a result of the number of tribal members that have lived there over a significant period of time, it is still removed from the particular landscape that his tribe originally called home.

Returning to the role of schools, Smith (1999) argues that, "through the curriculum and its underlying theory of knowledge, early schools redefined the world and where indigenous peoples were positioned within the world" (p. 33). Thus, Ethan learned that his "place" within schools and society at large was "in the corner," or at the margins. Ethan also remembers:

School was not a big deal to say, my parents or grandparents or my peers around me. A lot of the kids dropped out by the sixth or seventh grade and I, it just so happened that I moved around enough to be in situations where people expected me to go to school, so I didn't fall away like some of the other kids.

Even though he graduated from high school and did not "fall away," Ethan claims to have never seen a high school guidance counselor and acknowledges that, because he was an athlete (and an American Indian), he was able to slip by under the radar screen. While going unnoticed in high school was positive for Ethan in that he could slack off in his classes, it was problematic in that he graduated high school not knowing about structures in place that would help him attend college.

Ethan grew up feeling like his attendance at school was not valued or supported by his family and community or by the teachers and administrators at school. In recounting his experiences, Ethan emphasizes feeling "lost" in relation to the structures of schooling, which was characterized for him by a lack of emotional, social, and

academic support from his parents, teachers, and school counselors. Ironically, what this lack of support in navigating Western structures of schooling gave Ethan was an appreciation of “how to work with school” and “how to get by when [he] needed to do something.” This notion of learning “how to work with school” acknowledges that there are powerful structures in place within classrooms, but it also illustrates Ethan’s own adaptability and creativity. He learned early on to take what he needed from school and to discard everything else as quickly as possible given the legacies of colonialism, imperialism, and racism at work. Now, as a graduate student in school counseling, Ethan hopes to learn skills and obtain a credential that will help him support other Indian students through their interactions and conflicts with Western structures of schooling. Ethan’s own experiences as a marginalized student may be the most powerful thing he can share with Native youth because those experiences taught him how to navigate Western structures of schooling. While no one made the structures of schooling explicit for Ethan, he may be able to make those structures more visible to the Indigenous students he will work with as a school counselor.

In contrast to his experiences with schooling where he often felt marginalized and “lost”, Ethan has a strong sense of himself as a member of his Indigenous community. With his skin (that he and Sara agree is not “too light” or “too dark”) and dark hair, Ethan “looks Indian” in a stereotypically defined way. While I do not wish to reinscribe phenotypically-based definitions of who counts as “Indian” and who does not, I mention them here because (at least according to Ethan, Sara, and Steve) they have bearing on how Ethan is perceived and treated by members of his home community, other students in the teacher training program, and his non-Indigenous professors and peers. For

instance, Ethan's peers in the teacher training program often compare Ethan's status as "the real deal" or a "real Indian" with the status of other "less Indian" students like Steve or Sara. While this perception is not wholly based on his looks, they appear to be a contributing factor.

Another contributing factor to the perception among AITTP students that Ethan is a "real Indian" is that he grew up on a reservation with tribal values and morals, which he says always influence how he acts. Ethan says:

I still see myself [as Indian] even though I'm in the White society, I grew up on the reservation, well it wasn't really a reservation but I don't want to get into all of that. That's just part of history. I grew up Indian. Those beliefs, thoughts, values, morals, whatever your standards, are still in me.

In this commentary, several elements are salient. First, Ethan recognizes the central importance of history in relation to his own experiences and those of other American Indian individuals and communities when he says "That's just part of history." For him, history is central to his life experiences, underlying and permeating all that he does to the point where it is "just part of history." Secondly, Ethan divides the world up into White society and "the reservation" where he "grew up Indian." This division of space and place seems to point to a two worlds model (Deyhle, 1992; Henze & Vannett, 1993), but Ethan complicates the model by emphasizing his own Indianness as he carries out his daily life in the White society. Making specific reference to eye contact, Ethan says:

In the White society [eye contact is] very common and it shows respect and stuff like that, but it's the opposite in my culture because if you're lookin' at someone in the eye and you're sayin' something, you have to be real careful about how you're saying it or else it's offensive to them, you know, and they could see that as offensive. So, whenever I'm talking to someone in my culture, we're facing the same way, staring at the same wall or whatever. ...But, in the White society, I've learned that you stare people in the eye out of respect and that's how you, how you... And I always have to flip the roles whenever I go home and when I come back here and I know that difference and I'm fine with both...there's a lot of

advantages to my culture, and there's a lot of advantages to being in the White society.

In commenting on the different ways that eye contact is made and interpreted in his community and White society, Ethan references a particular practice that simultaneously highlights his identity as an Indigenous person and illustrates the adaptations and tensions that exist within and between his identities as an Indigenous person, a student in a predominantly White institution, and a future counselor of Indian students. Living in the city and attending Western, Ethan is learning particular ontologies and epistemologies, inscribed in practices of schooling (e.g., classroom participation requirements and the expectation that a student will make eye contact with the professor as a sign of attention or respect), that are somewhat necessary for survival within the institutional context (see Chapter V for an overview and Chapter VI for details). However, these same ontologies and epistemologies may not be considered communally appropriate or effective with Indian students when Ethan returns to his home community as a school counselor. Nonetheless, Ethan does not outright reject making eye contact but rather contextualizes its usage and comprehends when it is valuable to make eye contact and when it is detrimental. Ethan continues his commentary on eye contact, saying:

I've kind of grown out of that kind of cultural thing. I guess I've learned that in some ways [eye contact] is helpful, but, like I said, when I go back home, I switch the roles and I don't stare at people directly in the face or eyes because I know that and I know the feeling [when you forget] because they portray it pretty quick to you. But it doesn't really matter to me, either way I'm fine with it. I'm pretty open to it. Actually, I've grown up half my life on the reservation and half my life here. I'm pretty used to it. It took me awhile to get used to it and it took me a while to figure it out 'cause no one comes up to you and says, "These are all the White society things you gotta to know." Over the years, I've just figured out, oh, this is important to them, this is important to them, this is important to them, and I go along with it.

When he references figuring out "all the...things you gotta know" for conducting life in

the predominantly White city where Western is located, Ethan again illustrates both the adaptations and the tensions that exist between his identity as an Indigenous person from a reservation and a graduate student living in a city. Ethan grew up not making eye contact with other community members, but at Western he has learned to make eye contact to show respect within the classroom setting. When he returns, he must remember not to make eye contact and there are consequences for forgetting the rules governing interaction on the reservation. At times, Ethan has described himself as living in “two worlds,” but also as “bridge” between the two worlds, someone who is able to “flip the roles.” Thus, Ethan understands and is able to competently navigate eye contact within dominant and Indigenous contexts, both of which involve structures that must be accommodated, circumnavigated, transformed, or avoided. For Ethan, being “Indian” is complicated—it involves a knowledge of and adherence to appropriate cultural values and the ability, through his bachelor’s degree and the school counseling program, to understand and operate in White society for the betterment of his community.

Steve

Like Ethan, Steve is in his early thirties. While he is a member of a Western tribe, he grew up near the reservation of another tribe in the Southwest. His family made an effort to maintain ties with his father’s reservation and he returns every summer to participate in the life of the community. Like Ethan, Steve and his family live in graduate student housing. They tend to spend time together as an immediate family and make frequent trips home because they miss their extended family and community activities.

Prior to becoming a graduate student at Western university, Steve directed a

number of community programs broadly designed to provide after school activities and positive role models for Native youth. The individuals Steve saw in this capacity and his own experiences as a student in the same school district motivate him to learn all that he can from the school counseling program in order to provide a wider variety of life choices to American Indian youth. Like Ethan, Steve's desire to be a school counselor is also based on his own schooling experiences where he was lumped together with other Indian students in opposition to White students. He also believes that "the biggest problem was just Native American students were expected to fail. We didn't have high expectations. And, ah...I didn't think I would be a doctor or lawyer or Indian chief or anything like that. I didn't believe that." Steve goes on to say that he perceived the "only way out" was through a sports scholarship or joining the military. Steve's recollections of being expected to fail are not very different from Ethan's discussion of students from his reservation who "fell away" from school in the sixth or seventh grade or from Ethan's own experiences being stuck in the corner. Thus, the ability to provide choices to American Indian youth is a major motivating factor for Steve. With regard to the theories he is learning in his graduate classes, Steve says:

I think about, um, how this, how the different theories will work in a, from a Native American's perspective and working with, with ah, ah, um, Native American youth, 'cause that's what I will be doing. Um, it's really a power to me because a lot of these... I mean, they're choices and they're options and they're more humane, they're more humane because my experience, um, there was no option, there was no relationships that was built between a teacher and a student when I was a Native American student, so I'm excited, and I'm excited to want to get out there and have a job and work with Native American students and I'm driven to want to help other people, to help other Native American students and so, so it's really a power to me and really insightful to me to learn these theories and want to put them into practice.

For Steve, the counseling program, in some ways, stands in sharp contrast to his

experiences with K-12 education because he sees the theories he is learning as providing “choices” and opening up sites of possibility rather than constraining his options or abilities as a future school counselor of American Indian students. Significantly, Steve does not see the counseling theories he is learning as overriding his knowledge gained from lived experiences as a long-time community member, but rather as complementing his Indigenous knowledge in the service of Native youth of various tribal affiliations. This perspective may also stem from the ways in which Steve identifies himself as a person.

Steve is often classified as “Indian” by others simply on the basis of his looks, his tribal enrollment, or his membership in the American Indian Teacher Training Program. Yet, when I ask Steve about his identity as an Indigenous person he reminds me that he is half-White. In an interview I asked Steve, “What does it mean to you to be an Indigenous person?” and he responded:

I’m really coming into my own and it’s taken me this long, in my, in my thirties, to figure this out, but I’m starting to be comfortable of who I really am. You called me an Indigenous person. But, on the flip-side of that I’m also half White, so I’m half and half and so I’m really coming into my own of who I am and being comfortable in my own skin. I don’t have to be... I have both cultures, I have both races, both backgrounds and it’s unique. And, so, it’s unique for me. And so I’m, I don’t have to do things like an Indian. I don’t have to do things like a White person. I can be who I am. I can blaze my own trail.

In this commentary, Steve emphasizes the value of being “half and half,” with “both cultures...both races, both backgrounds.” Whereas being “half and half” would normally be conceptualized as a weakness or a hardship to be endured, Steve views his unique background as a great strength. This commentary about how Steve identifies himself echoes Ethan’s complicated discussion of learning to appropriately make or avoid eye contact in two different contexts and becoming comfortable with having to “flip the

roles.” It also echoes Sara saying, “If you want to know who I am/ Ask.” Taken together, these comments illustrate the range and variation in the ways that three American Indian individuals and graduate students define themselves in the twenty-first century, but they also construct a powerful counter narrative to deficit discourses in both education and American Indian communities about those individuals who seek to integrate Western and Indigenous ways of knowing and being as somehow being “less than,” lacking in either academic knowledge or community-based cultural knowledge. While each of the individuals draws on a “two worlds model” or employs the explanatory power of common dichotomies (Western/Indigenous, White/Indian), each individual also moves beyond these conceptions in their actions and their reflections on these actions, including Sara’s writing and recitation of “Lessons,” Ethan’s use of eye contact, and Steve’s incorporation of counseling theories into existing knowledge structures. Steve continues to interrogate his own identity, saying:

And so that’s who I am, that’s where I’m coming into my own like that...I’m half Indigenous. I’m half Native American. I’m half [tribal affiliation] who grew up off his reservation, closer to [a different] reservation. So, that’s unique. I have experiences that no one else ever had...I know more about my wife’s culture than I do about my own because I grew up down there and I worked down there. ...But that’s all right if I don’t know my culture, that’s, ya know ... when you hear Native Americans talk about it, that would be kind of a shameful thing. It was for me for a while, like, I don’t know my language and...I might say that with shame, but that’s my experience. Maybe one day I’ll learn it, but right now I know all about [my wife’s] culture, I know about ... culture, where I grew up. That’s just me. That’s just how unique I am. ... So, I just...I didn’t grow up on my reservation, so I’m adapting...I know about that culture.

Steve’s “Indian” identity emerges dialogically within locally contentious spaces on campus, including classrooms, professors’ offices, and public spaces. It is also related to historical policies and practices, including the fact that his father attended a boarding school where he was made to feel that his language and culture were not important.

Steve self-identifies based on both what he is, and what he is not, and he has started to become comfortable with who he “really is” through interactions with other people, both White and Indigenous. At stake is how Steve chooses to self-identify as well as how others choose to identify him (and his responses to such identification) as a result of and in relation to larger struggles over what it means to be an Indigenous person in the United States in the twenty-first century. Ultimately, Steve concludes that he is “adapting,” which, as Warrior (1995) argues, is one of the great strengths of American Indian traditions and peoples.

Summary

Briefly, I want to highlight some of the themes and tensions that emerge in and through the varied experiences, stories and opinions of Sara, Ethan, and Steve as American Indians who are attending graduate school at Western University in order to become school counselors working with Native students in predominantly Native communities. As I have discussed throughout the chapter, the participants’ experiences and their stories about those experiences are continually influenced by historical legacies of imperialism, colonialism, and racism. These legacies are both internalized and constituted in and through interaction with others, including other Native students at the university, non-native students and professors, and family and community members. Thus, when Sara recites, “If you want to know who I am...ASK,” she neglects to take into consideration the fact that identities are constituted in practice. That is, as we define ourselves in the present moment, we are also defined by others within contentious local practice as well as influenced by enduring historical struggles.

All three participants differ in their conception of what it means to be an Indigenous person in the twenty-first century and who has the power to define a contemporary American Indian identity. These differences, I would argue, are rooted in historical processes and enduring policy struggles and take shape as a result of different tribal and personal experiences with federal policy and Western structures of schooling. In the following chapter, I will address the ways in which historical relationships between American Indians and Western institutions of schooling remain relevant at the same time the participants in this study have found creative ways to adapt traditional ways of knowing and being to “work with school” in order to become better school counselors for their communities.

CHAPTER V

NEGOTIATING PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS AND COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

In the previous chapter, I discussed the ways in which Sara, Ethan, and Steve construct identities for themselves as Indigenous individuals within spaces of contentious local practice at Western University, but influenced by historical, “structuring” structures such as classrooms, office hours, or even the Miss American Indian Woman Scholar pageant. In this chapter, I will more fully explore the dialogic construction of participants’ identities by addressing the structural components of what it means to be simultaneously Indigenous individuals and community members, graduate students, and future school counselors and how participants negotiate these structures. Not only do the participants have their own conceptions about what it means to be all of these things, institutional and community actors also have their opinions, expectations, and requirements that influence how the participants choose to perform these multiple identities within the university context. In other words, participants coconstruct their identities in and through practice, influenced by their own senses of self as well as the structures of the counseling program at Western University, the structures of the American Indian Teacher Training Program, and the expectations of their communities,

all of which are also influenced by historical policies and practices regarding the relationship of American Indians to educational institutions.

Ethan, Steve, and Sara construct their identities in and through local contentious practice at Western University and their multiple, situated identities come into dialog with one another in ways largely influenced by enduring historical struggles, at points converging and at points diverging. Participants seem to be constantly in “a state of being ‘addressed’ and in the process of ‘answering’” (Holland & Lave, 2001) questions about their identities as Indigenous individuals, graduate students, and future school counselors. By this I mean that the participants construct identities for themselves at the same time that others are constructing identities for them to which they must respond in some way. In this process of constructing identities and responding to others’ perceptions of their identities, the participants find ways to resolve areas of tension for themselves, often becoming comfortable with the notion of living in and/or between two worlds (Barnhardt, 1994; Deyhle, 1992; Henze & Vanett, 1993) and serving as cultural translators or “bridges.” In order to describe the ways in which participants negotiate these dialogic processes, I will describe some of the structures that participants take into account as they construct identities for themselves and respond to the constructs created by others. I will then generally address the tensions that arise as participants confront structural barriers and the ways in which they choose to resolve those tensions through making strategic accommodations (see Chapter VI for a closer analysis of strategic accommodation practices).

The School Counseling Program at Western University

In Chapters I and II, I alluded to the programmatic goals of the school counseling program at Western University and the AITTP. Rooted in differing conceptions of knowledge, these two programs have somewhat different goals for the same group of students. Deloria (2001) provides a historical perspective on these differences:

English education...represented, and still represents, an effort to effect a complete transformation of beliefs and behaviors of Indians. Education in the English-American context resembles indoctrination more than it does other forms of teaching because it insists on implanting a particular body of knowledge and a specific view of the world, which often does not correspond to the life experiences that people have or might be expected to encounter (p. 42).

This legacy of different purposes for educating American Indians, I would argue, still influences how the two programs define themselves, but it is complicated in the present by more recent calls for the integration of Western and Indigenous ways of knowing and being (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005; Battiste, 2002) based on the notion that “no culture has all the answers” (Deloria, 1970, p. 115).

For the “effective instruction and training of licensed and credentialed students” who are expected to become “the leadership professionals of tomorrow,” the school counseling program seeks to instill a “research knowledge base” in students while, in theory, taking into account the “educational needs of the university, community, and state” (Western University Counseling program mission statement, retrieved 9/10/06). However, from my perspective as an observer in the halls and classrooms of the College of Education, there seemed to be a discrepancy between the intended programmatic outcomes and the actual programmatic outcomes of the school counseling program. Through a series of required courses, the students in this study developed a research knowledge base. As the professor of the Counseling Theories and Procedures course that

I observed told her class early in the fall semester, “you guys are developing your own theoretical perspectives now. You’re trying to figure out what works for you. You’re trying to figure out your own style—and what works for your clients” (Field Notes 9/26/05). What some students in this study did not develop, and were unable to develop, given the structure of the counseling program, was a sense of how to translate the theories into practice when one’s clients fell outside of the mainstream audience of school counselors, namely White children and their parents. In other words, the counseling program took into account the educational needs of some (e.g., White, educated) residents of the university, community, and state population while ignoring the needs of other sectors of the population (e.g., Native American communities). Unfortunately, Sara, Ethan, and Steve all, at various times, felt that what would work for their clients was not necessarily being taught in the school counseling program at Western University. For instance, when I asked Sara to talk about what she was learning in class, she replied, “I can’t see myself using a lot of these theories” and went on to explain that what she desired was practical knowledge about how to apply theoretical constructs in the service of her future clients. Similarly, Steve acknowledges that he thought about “how the different theories will work in a, from a Native American’s perspective and working with, ah...Native American youth, ‘cause that’s what I will be doing.” He spent so much time thinking about applying the theories he was learning because the application, at least the application in Native American communities, was not being taught in class. While I recognize that teaching a different counseling theories class for each sector of the population is impractical, I would argue that the theories and skills that were not being taught are theories and skills that would benefit all preservice counselors who will be

counseling an increasingly diverse student body. Rather than bracketing off multicultural counseling into its own week on the syllabus, I would argue that multicultural counseling needs to be consciously and continuously integrated throughout the semester.

The American Indian Teacher Training Program at Western University

In contrast to the school counseling program, the AITTP emphasizes training American Indian individuals as teachers and school counselors who will return to American Indian communities. The program description reads:

The American Indian Teacher Training Program (AITTP) graduates American Indian students with bachelor's degrees and master's degrees in education-related fields. AITTP students are prepared to return to American Indian communities as teachers, role models and leaders. At Western University, AITTP students have a unique and remarkable opportunity to make significant advances into enhanced educational opportunities for young American Indian students.

Part of the preparation that is referenced in this description involves students developing an understanding of the complicated relationship between Indigenous ways of knowing and being and Western structures of schooling and knowledge organization. This is achieved, in part, as students enroll in either an American Indian Experience course or, more recently, a course on Indigenous knowledges that is taught exclusively to AITTP students. Both courses explore historical and current relations between American Indians and dominant educational institutions while the Indigenous Knowledges course explicitly addresses ontological and epistemological differences as central course themes. For their final assignment in the Indigenous Knowledges course, students are asked to write a letter to one of their professors explaining how the professor might better take the student's ways of knowing and being into account while enriching the overall course experience. Further, when students graduate from the program, they are provided with one year of

professional induction services during which they have a cultural mentor, who is an Indigenous person and preferably a member of the community in which the individual is working, and a professional mentor, who may or may not be Indigenous but has extensive experience working with Native students in a particular place. In these ways the AITTP program puts its mission of preparing American Indians in education-related fields into practice.

Comparing the counseling program's mission statement and implementation of that mission statement to that of the AITTP's, I am struck by the differing conceptions of knowledge in which each program is rooted. Comparing Indigenous and academic notions of theory, Marker (2004) writes:

The university...is oriented toward the transportability of both knowledge and credentials; it gazes toward a vast ocean horizon, but misses its own reflection. ... An Indigenous sense of theory is concerned with the interconnected relationships in a specific place. ... An Indigenous theory will inevitably collide with the academy's insistence on separating the sacred from the secular because the story has a power to affect not only the consciousness of the individual, but also the spirit of the person (pp. 107-108).

Here, Marker is, in part, speaking to the tension Sara, Ethan, and Steve are articulating around feeling like the school counseling program is not adequately preparing them to work with American Indian students and communities, such as when Sara indicates that she "can't see [herself] using a lot of these theories." Extrapolating from the theoretical differences Marker (2004) outlines above, being prepared to counsel Indigenous students is a holistic process and requires more than knowing how to apply the skills and theories taught in the counseling program to particular clients. Deloria & Widlcat (2001) further address these tensions between Western and Indigenous conceptions of knowledge when they write:

The separation of knowledge into professional expertise and personal growth, is an insurmountable barrier for many Indian students. It creates severe emotional problems as the students seek to sort out the proper principles from these two isolated parts of human experience. The problem arises because in traditional Indian society there is no separation; there is, in fact, a reversal of the sequencer in which non-Indian education occurs: in traditional society the goal is to ensure personal growth and then to develop professional expertise (p. 43).

In particular, the training of Indigenous school counselors brings these tensions to the surface. In theory, at least, counseling is about some sort of synergy occurring as the counselor's professional expertise allows for and accommodates the personal growth of clients. In practice, however, the personal growth and experiences of clients from diverse backgrounds as well as individuals entering the profession are not usually acknowledged. Further, no matter how much professional expertise a counselor has amassed, being out of balance in other areas of life such as personal growth hinders one's ability to counsel effectively. I do not want to reinscribe dichotomous ways of comparing Western and Indigenous ways of acquiring knowledge, but rather I wish to stress the ways in which professional expertise and personal growth are continuously in dialog as they play out in the lives of the participants who are negotiating their identities as Indigenous individuals, graduate students, and future school counselors.

One of the ways in which professional expertise and personal growth are in dialog in the lives of the participants is through the differing structures and requirements of the school counseling program and the American Indian Teacher Training Program. For example, the school counseling program emphasizes the role each required course plays on the path to licensure as a school counselor whereas AITTP emphasizes the requirement that participants must serve American Indian students upon completion of the program. Sara, Ethan and Steve must negotiate these tensions and determine what is

important to them. Often, what the participants consider important is closely-connected to the opinions of individuals in their home communities or the communities in which they choose to work. In this way, the expectations of participants' communities are another area in which the tensions between professional expertise and personal growth play out.

Community Expectations

In the focus group and in individual interviews, it became evident that the expectations of participants' communities also influenced how students interacted within the university context, where tensions arose for them, and how they chose to resolve those tensions. All of the participants, in individual interviews, explicitly addressed issues of returning to particular American Indian communities and what community members would think of them since they had left the community to earn educational credentials. Participants focused their comments on ways of thinking and interacting, the language they used, a fear of being perceived as trying to become "White," and trepidation about their counseling credentials in relation to community-based experiential knowledge. For instance, Ethan commented:

The people I count as community, it's kind of different now that I'm getting an education and that 'cause a lot of people judge you and think that you're trying to become White or something....I do still feel a part of my community but in a different way.... [When I go home,] a lot of people listen to the way I talk and stuff like that, probably notice, I mean, I've always dressed the same way, but it's more about my thinking and, you know, cognitive abilities, more than anything.

Here, Ethan is talking about the ways in which attending Western University has altered his relationship to community by precipitating a change, however slight, in his ontologies and epistemologies. This change is evident to Ethan (and presumably to members of his

community) in terms of style of dress, ways of talking, and “cognitive abilities.” While the reference Ethan makes to differences in “cognitive abilities” suggests an internalization of the learning styles literature that promotes deficit views of his community, Ethan is also trying to explain differences in how he now frames arguments or discussions differently than other members of the community (perhaps in more abstract or generalized terms) and lacks the language to make such a comparison. He therefore falls back on the language of “cognitive abilities” to make his point. In some ways, Ethan’s commentary is about having the language to analyze and critique one’s own experiences.

In the above commentary, Ethan is also implicitly speaking to community expectations when he discusses the fact that people “judge” him based on his ways of speaking and the topics of conversation that arise. On the other hand, Ethan says, “my brother tells me everyone’s talking about [the fact that I’m getting a master’s degree] and they’re all watching out for my well-being.” Ethan follows-up by saying, “A lot of people have said, ‘[Ethan], regardless of what you think or how you feel, you’re a leader, you know.’ And that, to me, that means a lot to me to know that I’m a, I can be a leader in my community if I choose to be that, ya know.” There seems to be a communal expectation that Ethan will continue to be a member of his community, perhaps even a leader, and that this will occur through community-sanctioned ways rather than through the completion of a master’s degree program in school counseling. This is not to say that Ethan’s master’s degree will not be valued by or of use to the community but that, as part of integrating Western and Indigenous ways of knowing and being, there are community-based ways of determining who becomes a community leader.

Similarly, Sara hopes to return to work in a community in the Northwestern United States where she volunteered as a tutor and a mentor while an undergraduate student. It is not her own Indigenous community, but she has experience working there and it allows her to be closer to her immediate family even if she will have to go through an approval process with the tribal leaders and the community before she is accepted as a school counselor within the community. Further, Sara believes that she can make a difference in the community because she has both spent time in the community and attended Western educational institutions, developing an understanding of how they operate that she believes she can impart to other Native students. In this sense, Sara begins to embody the integration of Western and Indigenous ways of knowing and being; at the same time, she acknowledges that this integration is met with resistance in the reservation community where she hopes to work as a school counselor. Analyzing her status as an outsider to the community and as an individual with credentials from a Western educational institution in relation to community expectations, Sara reflected:

[A university credential] can help you or it can hinder you ... I mean, in some ways it could be impressive to somebody, but, um, it's probably, in the Indian world, it's not necessarily the schools you went to. ... I think it's more my experiences, obviously. It looks better for me to say I worked at the tribal school, I tutored kids, I worked at the safe house, you know, all of those things even more than "Well, I got my master's and I took all of these Indian classes. Hey, I'm really smart and I know what it's like." People would be like, "Girl, you don't even know what it's like to be out here." And, I mean, most of the time, I don't know, I've never lived out there for a long period of time, but I can say, hey, I've been out here three days a week for a whole year. I've got kids staying in school."

In this reflection, Sara emphasizes several elements of community expectations in relation to her negotiations around what it means to be simultaneously an Indigenous person, a graduate student, and a future school counselor. First, Sara invokes a "two worlds" model (Barnhardt, 1994; Deyhle, 1992; Henze & Vanett, 1993), differentiating

the university world where credentials and coursework in particular subject areas are valued from “the Indian world” where experiential knowledge is prioritized. The fact that lived experiences are privileged over wisdom imparted in a classroom seems completely natural to Sara, such as when she says “it’s more my experiences, *obviously*” (emphasis added). While one might argue that there are professional positions in dominant society where experience is valued over credentials, such as an engineer or a doctor, credentials are still taken into account in hiring people to fill these positions in ways that extend beyond licensing issues. In contrast, Sara’s credentials (a school counseling degree and licensure) are only necessary within the reservation community where she hopes to work because they are legally required. As Sara repeatedly reminded me, “[the school counseling degree] is just a means to an end. We have to do this to get where we want to go.” Ironically, in order to move closer to making a difference in the education of American Indian youth, the participants in this study must step away from their communities, a move which allows for perspective but also creates tensions for the participants as they negotiate what it means to be simultaneously Indigenous individuals, graduate students, and future school counselors of Indian youth.

Other factors may also exacerbate these tensions. For example, when Sara talks about community members saying to her, “Girl, you don’t even know what it’s like out here,” it becomes evident that, for her experiential knowledge to be valued, it must be rooted in a particular place (Basso, 1996; Battiste, 2002; Deloria & Wildcat, 2001; Feld & Basso, 1996), which is geographical in nature (a reservation community in the northwestern United States) but also relates to a political and historical context, as well as to relationships between people in those spaces. Sara outlines what is necessary for her

experiences to have value when, in this reflection, she references the amount of time she has spent in the community and names specific locations within the community (e.g., the safe house, the tribal school). Finally, the community must have a sense that Sara is doing work in service of the community, which is evidenced when Sara discusses the weight that will be placed upon the fact that she's "got kids staying in school."

While Sara is clear about the expectations and requirements of the community in which she hopes to work, she is also equally clear that she will have a difficult time proving to community members that she meets those expectations. Recall from Chapter IV that Sara is often located by others as betwixt and between the White world and the Indian world that she describes. Thus, Sara wonders whether or not any Indigenous community in which she hopes to work will be accepting of her. She says:

I think they'll be issues like that anywhere unless I were, even if I went back to my own reservation, they'd say like you didn't grow up here, you don't know. It would be that exact same thing. So I don't really think I can win in any situation. I've just got to be tough and after they'll realize.

Here, the "two worlds" model Sara outlined above allows her to talk about being "caught" between the two worlds in a situation where she can never win. Nonetheless, she comments, "after they'll realize," meaning that once she is working in the community and contributing to the overall well-being of the community, community members will, based on their own experiences, be forced to acknowledge that Sara is capable of working in the service of the community. In many ways, this process of moving from "outsider" to "insider" status within a community is not unique to Sara's experience. Having left their communities to attend Western University, Ethan and Steve will face similar challenges, as do all outsiders entering (or reentering) new communities. Significantly, though, Sara sees her acceptance as an "insider" happening through

participation in the community that produces experiential and place-based knowledge, which then legitimizes the integration of Western and Indigenous knowledge systems that she personifies. This is similar to the process through which Ethan sees himself becoming a leader in his community.

Some (Deyhle, 1992; Henze & Vanett, 1993) would argue that the “two worlds” model breaks down in this instance because it cannot explain what it is like to be “caught” between two worlds or envision a resolution to being “caught” that does not involve a marked emphasis on one “world” or the other. I would argue, along with others (Brayboy, Castagno, & Maughn, 2006), that the model is important here both because Sara uses it to explain her own life and because university and community structures are set up in such a way as to reinscribe dichotomies between the “university world” and the “Indian world.” That is to say that the university neither expects nor intends for those individuals whom it credentials to return home in the service of their communities and, thus, an education at Western University (and most other large research universities) involves indoctrination into academic ways of thinking, writing, and speaking with little or no concern for how this indoctrination effects the lives of real students from diverse communities (Deloria & Wildcat, 2001; Ivanic, 1998). The university’s official curriculum is not concerned with the integration of Western and Indigenous knowledge systems. Similarly, Indigenous communities assume that, most likely, those community members who are credentialed by Western universities will not want to return home or, returning to Marker (2004) and Deloria and Wildcat’s (2001) comments about the separation of Western and Indigenous knowledge systems, will not have the necessary knowledge base for serving the community. For example, an advertisement for the

American Indian College Fund that is currently running in many popular magazines (e.g., *In Style* November 2006) reads, “If I stay on the rez, I can use my education to help my people.” The assumption is that being educated off of the reservation at an institution that is not tribally-governed does not produce individuals who are well-rounded enough to serve the community. Assumptions like these and the structures they are rooted in reinscribe a “two worlds” model. For Sara (as for Ethan and Steve), invoking the two worlds model allows her to address these institutional structures and the tensions resulting from enduring historical struggles between them while also taking into account her own agency. Sara utilizes the two worlds model to talk about herself as “caught” between two worlds. This suggests that structures are forcing Sara to remain in a state of limbo and, in part, this is happening as a result of historical policies and practices that frame American Indians as liminal beings with a precarious racial and political status in the United States. In particular, Sara’s status as the descendant of a tribe that was terminated by the federal government and as an individual without a tribal enrollment card intensifies the feeling of being in limbo for her. Where the two worlds model needs to be pushed is in the ways that such a construct also allows for tremendous possibility, such as when Sara is able to reconcile and integrate Western and Indigenous ways of knowing and being. Battiste (2002) begins to envision what this might look like when she remarks that, “Indigenous knowledge is far more than the binary opposite of western knowledge” (p. 5). One possibility lies in viewing those individuals who are “caught” between two worlds as, in fact, establishing a bridge between the two worlds and serving an important cultural translation function. Already this is evident in the ways that the participants reflect on their own experiences, such as when Ethan speaks about “flipping

the roles” or Steve mentions that he has “both cultures.” Utilizing the notion of a “bridge” between two worlds or the notion of individuals as cultural translators, the tensions that Sara articulates in terms of being “caught” between two worlds become seen as resources and the individuals who are able to serve as bridges in these cultural translation roles become valued by both the university and community “worlds.”

In both Sara and Ethan’s reflections on community expectations, we see complicated tensions playing out between Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies and American Indian communities’ needs for educators and school counselors who understand their youth and can aid in the process of negotiating multiple worldviews. While some members of Ethan’s community police his ways of thinking, speaking, and acting, accusing him of “becoming White,” other members of his community encourage him and see him as a future community leader. Those community members that accuse him of “becoming White” are an example of how community and university structures are set up to reinscribe a two worlds model where one’s way of knowing are either Indigenous or Western. In contrast, those individuals within the community who envision Ethan as a future leader are emphasizing the adaptability of knowledge and tradition over time and recognizing the need for cultural translators, educated in the integration of Western and Indigenous knowledge systems, who understand both worlds well. For Sara, similar issues are salient. It is almost certain that, if she is able to get a job, the community in which she will work will police her ways of thinking, speaking, and acting, as well as her lived experiences. Like Ethan, Sara will have to prove her ability to make a difference, for example, through keeping Reservation youth from dropping out of school. Sara’s lived experiences as the exoticized “Other,” who is

neither “White enough” in dominant society nor “Indian enough” in Indigenous communities (Castagno, 2005) lead her to believe that ultimately she will be accepted, or at least tolerated, by the community because she has always found a way to negotiate these tensions in the past. Finally, while Steve’s “voice” does not enter into my discussion here, it is important to note that he faces similar issues. Certainly, Steve is thinking about particular tensions and how they will play out when he returns home, such as when he discusses the application of the counseling theories that he is learning to the problems of Native youth in Chapter IV. When thinking about what it means to be simultaneously an Indigenous individual (and community member), a graduate student, and a future school counselor of Indian students, participants take into account and wrestle with community “norms” and expectations.

Summary

In this chapter, I have described the policies and practices of the school counseling program in relation to the American Indian Teacher Training Program and students’ perspectives on their experiences as participants in both programs. I have also portrayed how students perceive community expectations and values in relation to their experiences at Western University and their envisioned career trajectories. To this end, I have described the ways in which current structures are closely related to enduring policy struggles between the U.S. government and American Indians, as well as to differing notions of what counts as knowledge. One way in which this debate is framed is in the distinction between personal growth and professional expertise. Participants developed a range of practices that allowed them to negotiate the tensions between university and

community “worlds” and influenced how they identified as Indigenous individuals, graduate students and future school counselors. In the following chapter, I portray specific instances within the locally-contentious university context where participants simultaneously made choices about how to negotiate particular situations and how to define themselves as Indigenous individuals, graduate students, and future school counselors.

CHAPTER VI

NEGOTIATING ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

WHILE REMAINING INDIAN

In Chapter V, I described the policies and practices of the school counseling program in relation to the American Indian Teacher Training Program and community expectations of students. The purpose of that discussion was to establish the structural frameworks that students must negotiate on a daily basis and to generally outline the impact of those negotiations on their multiple, situated identities. In this chapter, I build on that framework by describing and analyzing specific moments of practice in which negotiations take place and participants make choices related to the construction of their identities as Indigenous individuals, graduate students, and future school counselors. As Levinson and Holland (1996) have written, individuals within structures such as universities “may produce practices and identities consonant with local cultural notions of the ‘educated person,’ but some practices and identities may in fact challenge those notions” (p. 21). While the literature suggests that American Indian students in classrooms tend not to produce identities or practices consonant with commonly accepted notions of the “educated person” (Barnhardt, 1994; Foley, 1996; Philips, 1972, 1983/1993), the research on American Indians in higher education does suggest that

Students develop a range of cultural translation practices, similar to the code-switching of fluent bilinguals (Heller, 1995), that allow them to be simultaneously “good Indians” and “good students” (Brayboy, 2005a). Following Brayboy (1999, 2004a), I use the term “good Indian” to refer to Indigenous individuals who are respected by their home communities and enact behavior consistent with the community expectations described in Chapter V. In contrast, I use the term “good student” to refer to individuals and behaviors that are valued by power brokers at Western University and rewarded with grades of “A” and “B” (Brayboy, 1999, 2004a). In defining “good Indian” and “good student” in somewhat oppositional ways, I hope to complexify previous discussions about what it means to simultaneously be a “good Indian” and a “good student” by depicting, through participants’ experiences and their reflections on those experiences, the range and variation in ways to be a “good Indian” and a “good student” while seeking a degree in school counseling.

In this chapter, I examine participants’ schooling experiences and their reflections on these experiences within the context of two foundational courses in the school counseling program, a counseling theories and procedures course and a counseling skills course. I explore the ways in which participants’ ontologies and epistemologies, rooted in familial histories, tribal histories, and government policies, both influence and are influenced by their interactions with the university and its agents (Levinson & Holland, 1996; Holland & Lave, 2001), ultimately shaping their identities as Indigenous individuals, graduate students, and future school counselors. Because the process is dialogic and depends both on how the participants position themselves and how they are positioned by others, Sara, Ethan, and Steve do not always choose to be “good Indians”

and “good students” nor is it always possible. Participants’ efforts to serve as cultural translators between their Indigenous communities and Western academic and school counseling conventions are met with varying degrees of success and influence how they coconstruct their multiple, situated identities as Indigenous individuals, graduate students and future school counselors of Native students.

Ethan: “I really believe that we’re working within a system.”

In Chapter IV, I discussed Ethan’s upbringing on the reservation and his attendance at various BIA-run boarding schools and reservation day schools. Ethan recalled feeling “lost” at school and still talks about the study strategies he recommends to other Indigenous students as tools so “you don’t ever feel lost.” He is also acutely aware of the historical silencing of Indigenous peoples in mainstream educational institutions through colonizing practices and continues to feel silenced within the institution, saying, “I’m pretty much a peon to everyone else [at the university]. They don’t even notice me.” On the other hand, Ethan was (and continues to be) relatively secure in his identity as a member of his Indigenous community. For him, being a “good Indian” has never been a struggle, but being a “good student” seems to be a continuous struggle. Ethan often commented that his early interactions with Western institutions of schooling gave him an appreciation of “how to work with school” and “how to get by when [he] needed to do something and get it done.” In our interactions, he frequently referred to Western University as a system where everyone has a job to do and particular rules govern the behavior of students and faculty. On one occasion he commented:

This may sound funny, but I really believe that we’re working within a system, ya know, and if you know how to jump through the hurdles, and I’m not saying kiss

butt to professors, but if you know how to ... the professors know they're in a system too and they've gotta get their job done and the students gotta get their job done, and if you do your job, and you befriend them or treat them the way they'd like to be treated, with respect, then ... that's always at the back of my mind.

Two elements of this comment are particularly salient for Ethan in terms of negotiating what it means to be an Indigenous person and a graduate student confronting differing ontologies and epistemologies. Ethan believes that part of being a “good student” is knowledge of “how to jump through the hurdles,” or being able to see and navigate institutional requirements through a process of making strategic accommodations. For students from the dominant culture, these institutional requirements are largely visible and intuitive as a result of upbringings consonant with university culture. For students like Ethan, such requirements are largely invisible and must be made visible before they can be navigated. Ethan’s need to know “how to jump through the hurdles” is also a product of historical relations between the U.S. Government and American Indians in which deception has been the norm rather than the exception. Second, Ethan believes that respect is a critical element of successfully navigating the university system, such as when he references treating his professors in a manner in which he would like to be treated. This perspective seems to be grounded in Indigenous epistemologies about the role of community elders, as well as the more abstract principles of reciprocity and relatedness (Burkhart, 2004). As will become evident later in this chapter, Ethan’s epistemological assumptions around respect and reciprocity are not usually reciprocated by his professors. Even in his attempts to make sense of the structures that make up Western University, Ethan remains fundamentally a “good Indian” but struggles with enacting “good student” behavior because, in fact, his assumptions about what it means to do his job within the system do not always match up with actual expectations.

Ethan elaborates on what it means to do his job as a student, saying:

What does it mean to do my job? Well, I'm not saying brown-nosing the teachers or professors, but to get my papers in on time, to be there in class on time, to stay in class the whole time, to ... just work with your professor the best you can and let them know that you are there for your education and you're interested in what they're trying to give you which, in my case, is a school counseling degree.

In some ways, this “job description” indicates that Ethan knows what the system requires of him, but in other ways it is less clear. For example, Ethan references “brown-nosing the teachers or professors” as something in which he does not participate. Yet, the mere mention of “brown-nosing” suggests that others around Ethan may be buying into “brown-nosing” as a way to influence professors and “work with school.” In Ethan’s list however, the items are mostly product-oriented, dealing with the timeline for accomplishing particular tasks rather than the content of those tasks. For many Indigenous students, a major difference between community and place-based ontologies and epistemologies and Western ontologies and epistemologies is the emphasis on specific, but randomly chosen, deadlines (Battiste, 2002). In other words, Western ontologies and epistemologies tend to emphasize the finished product over the process (Barnhardt, 1994; Basso, 1996; Marker, 2004). Indigenous students like Ethan, when learning how to “work with school,” may overcompensate by focusing too much on the deadline and the product required on that date, forgetting about the process or the content. For Ethan, one of the things he has struggled with is how to produce a finished product by the deadline that also incorporates a process and a content that feels appropriate to him. He comments:

You come out here to go to school, and your teachers want you to do, they have certain, well ... they're not thinking about how you grew up or how you learned or whatever. They're just saying, ya know, you need to produce this and this is what I want. And a lot of times, I have to read it over two or three times just to adjust to it

and think about how I'm gonna do that and how I'm gonna use what I grew up with, or my experiences, so that, um, and then explain it to them. And sometimes I catch myself explaining it in the papers I write, ya know, that this is, this is how I understand this. ... And I make sure that they know that an Indian wrote this paper compared to someone else who wrote it in a different way and stuff. I don't want to give them generic papers. I want to give them, like, this has been my experience and this is how I'm writing it.

When Ethan references having to read an assignment description multiple times “just to adjust to it and think about how I'm gonna do that,” he is addressing the translation process he goes through in completing an assignment. He must not only interpret the assignment description, placing it into his own frames of reference, but he must then translate his response into a format that his professor will be able to relate to.

Importantly, one of the key elements to completing an assignment for Ethan is giving an abstract assignment context by relating it to his own experiences as an Indigenous person (Battiste, 2002; Deloria & Wildcat, 2001; Marker, 1998). He says, “I guess before I can help someone else, it's gotta make sense to me and how I can use it in my own life before I can apply it to someone else's life.” Since Ethan's ultimate goal is to be a school counselor working with Indigenous students, it is important that he be able to apply the counseling theories he is learning to specific contexts. Otherwise, as Deloria (1969/1988) cautions, abstract theories may lead to abstract actions that do not benefit Indigenous communities. Within the academy, Ethan remains a voice for Indigenous peoples and resists assimilation, by connecting abstract theories to his own experiences and making sure that his professors know that “an Indian wrote this paper.”

Ethan also comments, “I still think you can get it done writing in your own style. ... My professors know that I'm gonna write it this way, but I'll keep it in the rubric or format you want it in.” By finding ways to incorporate his own perspective and

experiences while adhering to structural conventions of academic writing, Ethan is able to establish an applied context for the academic theories he is learning. In this way he strategically accommodates the requirements of Western's school counseling program while maintaining his cultural integrity as a "good Indian" and an educated member of his home community (Marker, 2004). However, this process does not always produce a product that his professors would consider to be the work of a "good student." Further, following the rubric or meeting formatting requirements may also require Ethan to temporarily move away from the ontologies and epistemologies associated with being a "good Indian" (Barnhardt, 1994). In this way it is not always possible for Ethan to be simultaneously a "good Indian" and a "good student," but strategic accommodations, like writing an essay in an academically acceptable format while making connections to his own lived experiences as an Indigenous person make it more possible for Ethan to be simultaneously a graduate student and an Indigenous person.

Reflecting on his behavior as a student, Ethan says:

I would say, when I want to be, I can be a very good student, but if I ... If I get my business done, then I'm a very good student, but if not, then I'm an average student like the rest of them that are goofing off or whatever.

Overall, Ethan has a reputation among his fellow students as someone who does not do very well in his classes. When he complained about having to retake a class and blamed it on the professor's unclear expectations, Sara questioned whether or not he had actually lived up to the professor's stated expectations in the first place (focus group, 5/23/06). I would argue that Ethan's overall "average" performance as a student is related to a number of interrelated factors. As an American Indian youth, Ethan learned that his place in school was "in the corner" and he felt "lost." As a graduate student he seems to

have internalized these low expectations, which are not so different from Steve's commentary that "Native American students were expected to fail ... I didn't really think I'd ever have a good payin' job, or anything like that." In addition, Ethan's reputation as an "average" or below average student also points to the persistent stereotyping of Indian students as lacking in motivation or possessed of lower cognitive abilities (Dumont, 1972; Erickson & Mohatt, 1982; Foley, 1996; McCarty, Lynch, Wallace & Benally, 1991; Philips, 1983/1993). In this instance, Ethan may lack motivation in relation to getting his schoolwork done, but he is far from unmotivated when it comes to becoming a school counselor in the service of his community. Resistance to such low expectations and stereotypes is also evident in Ethan's characterization of himself as a learner and in his behavior as a student. All of these factors are closely connected to Ethan's family and tribal histories, as well as to historical policies rooted in colonialism, imperialism, and racism. Such histories have also resulted in differing ontologies and epistemologies that are evident in Ethan's attitude toward school and in which differences he chooses to highlight.

Ethan emphasizes principles of relatedness and reciprocity in relation to product versus process-centered approaches to the acquisition and evaluation of knowledge (Burkhart, 2004). He also attempts to resist imperialist and racist stereotypes at the same time that others characterize him based on those stereotypes. This pattern of authoring one's self into the world at the same time that others ascribe identities to one's self within a contentious local practice where ontologies and epistemologies clash and are accommodated is especially evident in patterns of classroom interaction. In his classes, Ethan tends to be reserved and easily falls into popular and academic representations of

the “silent, sullen Indian” that Foley (1996) portrays. While he usually sits in the left front corner of the classroom with most of the other American Indian students, he prefers to listen to the professor while he stares at the ceiling with his arms across his chest. He rarely takes notes and almost never participates in class outside of small group settings where he is required to do so. According to Ethan:

Some days I don’t feel as, what would you call it, outgoing or like, if I don’t really have something, if I don’t know too much about the subject, or if I don’t have input or I don’t have a real stance on it, I won’t say anything. It just depends on the day. If I feel good and I want to do, um, if I feel like there’s something I should be saying that will help people out to know, I’ll definitely say it.

At the heart of this comment are Ethan’s ontological and epistemological reasons for not participating in classroom discussions on a regular basis. In Indigenous communities, competitive individualism is generally looked down upon (Barnhardt, 1994). So, for Ethan to contribute a “right” answer that might result in a perception of him as “better than” other students in his courses, particularly other Indigenous students, is problematic for Ethan as a responsible member of an Indigenous community. The consequences for contributing a “wrong” answer to class discussion are equally problematic for Ethan as an Indigenous person. In Indigenous communities, one is often expected to practice new skills and think about new knowledge privately before offering a public opinion or asking a question (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005; Marker, 2004; Medicine, 2001). It is also considered disrespectful to challenge an elder’s opinions and especially to do so publicly.

When Ethan notes that he doesn’t participate if he doesn’t “know too much about the subject,” he is drawing upon ontologies that are valued in his home community. “in the realm of Indigenous knowledge,” Marker (1998) reminds us, “context and authority are central concerns” (p. 474). Not only is Ethan concerned about respecting the

professor's authority on issues related to school counseling, he is also concerned about the authority he has as an Indigenous person speaking about his home community. When Ethan comments that, "if I don't really have something, if I don't know too much about the subject, or if I don't have input or I don't have a real stance on it, I won't say anything," he is also suggesting, in part, that he feels like the professor and his classmates will not "hear" what he has to say. They will listen to the words he is speaking, but will not be able or willing to both "hear" the meaning of what he has to say and value his contribution to the interaction, effectively silencing Ethan or denying his participation in the interaction. Ethan does not feel that it is his responsibility to make himself understood and the non-Indigenous students in the class and the professor display a lack of desire to do the work necessary for them to "hear" what Ethan is saying; they believe that the burden of understanding lies on the speaker to explain what he is saying, rather than on the listener to determine meaning, as is the case in Indigenous communities (Basso, 1996). Nonetheless, Ethan is also conscious of the fact that his nonparticipatory ontology has consequences for him as a "good student," something he tries to mitigate by developing relationships with professors and dialoging with them during one-on-one meetings about where he comes from in relation to where they come from. This strategy of using individual meetings and office hours to attract a professor's attention, display "good student" behavior, and explain differences of opinion is not a new one for Indigenous students. At least two of the students in Brayboy's (2005a) study of American Indian students in Ivy League institutions also used office hours as a way to demonstrate that they were good students, while remaining faithful to Indigenous ways of being.

Finally, connected to the principles of relatedness and reciprocity, one *is* expected to contribute when it will be of value to the community (Burkhart, 2004; Brayboy, 2004a, 2005a). Thus, it is not surprising that Ethan will participate if he has a comment or a question that he believes “will help people out to know.” This further complicates our understanding of Ethan’s positioning within the classroom and of the literature on American Indian classroom participation and interaction, as well as our understandings of how individuals negotiate their positioning as marked “Others” in the classroom (Owens, 2001; Shanley, 2001). Ethan’s statement suggests that he will speak up in class when he “should.” For Ethan, the notion of “something I should be saying” indexes a responsibility to both his Indigenous community and to the cohort of preservice counselors that might work with American Indian students during their careers. Thus, when something comes up in class, a particular counseling theory or procedure, that Ethan believes will be harmful to or ineffective with members of his community, he disrupts his nonparticipatory ideology and shifts how he positions himself in the classroom, simultaneously highlighting elements of what it means to be a “good Indian,” a “good student,” and a “good counselor.”

In my observations of Ethan in class, he was an extremely infrequent contributor to large class discussions and preferred to “just listen” and remain silent. Prior to the day when the incident I describe here happened, I have recorded in my field notes only one instance where Ethan raised his hand to make a comment. At that time, six weeks into the semester, the professor did not know his name and had to say “I’m sorry, what’s your name again?” before she could call on him (field notes, 10/03/05). While there were approximately thirty students in the class and the professor commented on its relatively

large size, she seemed to know the names of all of the other students in the course by the second class meeting and called on them by name.

On a daily basis, such a nonparticipatory ontology allows Ethan to position himself a good Indian in the eyes of his [tribal affiliation] community, but it does not make him a “good student” in the eyes of his professors. Further, Ethan’s desire to “just listen” in his classes ends up reinforcing the learning styles literature on classroom participation and interaction, which suggests that American Indian students are uncomfortable in large group settings and will not participate because of the “kind” of learners they are presumed to be (Erickson & Mohatt, 1982; Philips, 1983/1993). While critiques of the learning styles literature have suggested that American Indian students do not participate in class because the topics covered are not relevant to their lives, this is only part of what is happening in Ethan’s case (McCarty, Lynch, Wallace & Benally, 1991). Ethan chooses not to participate in order to remain faithful to his community’s ontologies and epistemologies and position himself as a “good Indian.” As discussed above, his familial and tribal histories, as well as government policies, are also important to understanding the complete context of the ways in which Ethan positions himself and is positioned by others within the classroom.

Over the course of the semester, I only observed Ethan disrupt his non-participatory ontology once. It was a typical class period where the professor was lecturing from power point slides about Carl Rogers, who is considered the founder of “client-centered” approaches to counseling. In the “client-centered” approach pioneered by Rogers, the counselor is not supposed to provide direction to the client. Rather, the counselor is supposed to reflect what he or she “hears” the client saying back to the

client. In theory, this is supposed to promote acceptance of one's situation and the mobilization of resources from within one's self in order to deal with the problem.

Part way through the professor's lecture on Rogers, Ethan raised his hand to ask a question about Rogers. In the initial interaction between Ethan and the professor, he was cut off twice by students in the class and once by the professor. None of them seemed to notice they had cut Ethan off. However, Ethan raised his hand again to make a comment. In response to his first question, the professor gave an example where she used a serial killer and a child molester as potential clients. In his comment, Ethan responded to these examples and gave an example of his own to begin to suggest why he had a problem with client-centered approaches to counseling. He gave the example of a potential client who came in and said, "I'm so rich, I don't know what to do with it." Ethan argued that, as a therapist, he would be unable to relate to this client and would not know how to accurately reflect his experiences back to him. Ethan then asked if it was possible to be empathetic if you hadn't had the experience your client had and argued that a therapist was unlikely to be accepted by his client if he didn't share particular experiences or types of experiences with the client. The professor responded that, when they got to the class on multiculturalism—*then* they would discuss the issue of therapist-client match. The implication in her tone of voice seemed to be that Ethan was wasting class time and getting the class off-topic. Further, she argued that therapists and clients who were too similar would also have problems. At this point in time, Ethan openly challenged the professor. He made a case for the dangers of a client and his or her therapist being too different by relating a personal story about going to see a counselor. Initially, Ethan went to one counselor who was too different. Then, he found somebody else who initially

made some assumptions about Ethan as an American Indian male, but ultimately Ethan and the counselor were able to figure out their relationship and Ethan was satisfied with the counseling he received. The professor seemed unsure of how to respond to Ethan's personal story and ultimately said, "Good for you. Most people give up after going to one therapist who isn't a good match. Now, in the interest of time, we need to move along." With this comment, the dialog between Ethan and the professor abruptly ended and the professor returned to lecturing from her power point slides, effectively silencing Ethan.

There are several elements of this interaction that are worth analyzing in relation to differing ontologies, epistemologies, and histories that influence how the interlocutors simultaneously construct their own identities and attempt to construct identities for others. First, the fact that two other students and the professor cut Ethan off is worthy of notice. None of them seemed to notice or care that they interrupted Ethan, suggesting two different speech patterns, as well as that there were power dynamics at play in the classroom that located Ethan, as a member of a colonized group, as the person with the least power in the interaction, a "peon." In part, the "turn-sharking" that takes place as the professor and the other students cut Ethan off is simply the way of the academy, but because they cannot "hear" what he had to say, the other students and the professor effectively silenced Ethan (Barnhardt, 1994; Marker, 2004). Interestingly, Ethan persisted, raising his hand again and again, and continued to engage in the interaction. In this interaction, we also see the ways in which meaning is mutually constructed and contested as Ethan positions himself as a "good Indian" while the other students and the professor try to position Ethan as a "silent" Indian who should remain silent. Returning

to enduring policy struggles over the place of American Indians in society, America seems to love “real Indians” as long as they stay hidden and leave plenty of room for highly visible, popular representations of Indians, including Whites dressing up as “Indians,” as was the case on the eve of the Boston Tea Party (Deloria, 1998; Owens, 2001; Shanley, 2001).

In the tension between Ethan’s positioning of himself as a “good Indian” and the ways in which others work to position him as a “silent Indian” (Foley, 1996), his continued participation temporarily alters the power dynamic in the classroom. When traditionally accepted “good student” behavior, such as raising his hand and asking a question, fails to provide Ethan with a privileged position in the interaction, he emphasizes his positionality as a good member of his Indigenous community by attempting to relay a piece of advice to non-Indigenous preservice counselors who might some day work with Indigenous students. While his behavior in the interaction, such as raising his voice and challenging the professor are not the expected ways of positioning himself as a “good Indian” (or a “good student”), Ethan does so by locating himself as the classroom expert on his community and the experiences of members of his community with counselors. In relating Rogers’ theories of counseling to a personal experience and making his point through narrative, Ethan is also enacting Indigenous epistemologies around context, relatedness, and the power of stories as theory (Alexie, 2000; Basso, 1996; Battiste, 2002; Brayboy, 2005b; Burkhart, 2004; Marker, 2004; Smith, 1999; Warrior, 2005; Williams, 1997). Ethan’s narrative is a powerful reminder to the professor and the other students in the class that he is not “like everybody else.” He doesn’t participate in institutionally sanctioned ways and he has had experiences that

counter the dominant script of what it means to be a “good counselor” within the confines of the counseling program. The professor’s reaction and desire to move along “in the interest of time,” as well as the silence of the other students in the class, indicate the jarring impact of Ethan’s use of narrative and personal experience within a discipline that emphasizes the use of impersonal case studies as learning tools.

In an interview, Ethan told me that he disrupted his everyday ontologies and took the risk of participating in this situation because he believed that his experiences would help the non-Indigenous students in the class should they ever counsel Indigenous students. He reflects, “The people [here in the counseling program] think that they can be the fix-all for someone, that’s not always the case, ya know. Everyone’s needs are different and a certain person or whatever may meet those needs, at least that’s what I believe.” Ethan is emphasizing that differences in ontology, epistemology, and experience will matter when the preservice counselors are working in schools in the future while also positioning himself as a “good Indian” and a “good counselor”. He is also highlighting his own Indigenous epistemological notions that context matters and stories may in fact provide lessons or outline theories. As Brayboy’s mother reminds him and us, as readers, “Our stories are our theories.” Further, as the Apaches with whom Basso (1996, 2000) works remind us, stories also provide a moral compass for Indigenous communities. Those who choose to stray from the community’s moral compass may even be “stalked” by a particular story that offers a lesson about what happens when one behaves in a particular way. Taken collectively, these stories “are ‘about’ what it means to be a Western Apache or, to make the point less dramatically, what it is that being Apache should normally and properly entail” (Basso, 2000, p. 46).

By telling a personal story, Ethan both adheres to communally accepted ways of being and reminds others what those ontologies are in relation to counseling Native American students.

Ultimately, Ethan maintains his personal integrity as an Indigenous person and is able to position himself as a “good preservice counselor” but fails to position himself as a “good student.” The irony of this is that, while adhering to mainstream classroom participation conventions such as hand-raising and turn-taking that run counter to his everyday ontologies, Ethan is able to remain a good Indian but unable to become seen as a good student both because the content of what he says runs counter to established counseling theories and practices and because he is located by others in a particular place and space within the classroom. Nonetheless, Ethan makes it clear that being a “good student” or being perceived as such is not his priority. He says, “I didn’t really care to impress [the professor] or whoever. I was doing it more for people’s education or whatever. I mean, it was just important to me because I went through counseling and I know how important it can be.” In this comment, Ethan emphasizes that he is not only concerned with contributing to the knowledge of the community of preservice counselors of which he is a part, but also with the need to protect members of his Indigenous community from counselors who are ignorant when it comes to local, place-based ontologies and epistemologies within particular Indigenous communities. He is not concerned with garnering individual recognition or the title of “good student” from the professor.

In moving on from Ethan’s concerns and trivializing them in her “good for you” validation rather than extracting the lessons implicit in Ethan’s narrative, as well as with

her patronizing tone in the interaction, the professor effectively silences Ethan, positioning him as a “silent” Indian and seemingly achieving her goal of making Ethan less visible in the classroom. When I asked him to reflect on the interaction he said:

[The professor] didn’t emphasize those points there, that I made and it could be because, and this has happened before several times, the professor just sees it in a different way than I do and they, um And a lot of times, this is why sometimes you don’t speak up is because they’re so strong in their beliefs and you’re just trying to make a comment and they think because they have a PhD or whatever that the comments aren’t valid.

In referencing that because the professor sees the theories “in a different way,” she chooses to invalidate Ethan’s perspective and that discourages him from participating, Ethan is really talking about a clash of ontologies and epistemologies. In the university context, although challenging someone’s opinion is expected, those with more credentials in the form of letters after their names (MA, PhD) are considered to be in control of knowledge production and dissemination (Barnhardt, 1994; Barnhardt, 2002; Brayboy, 2004b, 2005a). In contrast, Ethan constructs authority in his community as derived from lived experiences, time on the planet, and the respect of others earned through living in a way that is in keeping with the values of the community³ (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005; Basso, 1996; Medicine, 2001). Knowledge is meant to be shared rather than used to demonstrate one’s superiority over others (Battiste, 2002). By frequently choosing not to participate in class, Ethan minimizes ontological and epistemological conflicts in the classroom. Such a strategy allows him to remain a “good Indian” but makes it difficult for him to become seen as a “good student.” This is both the result of how he positions himself and how he is positioned by the professor and his peers. The professor also

³ While both Ethan and I recognize that there are factions and differences of opinion within his tribal community, Ethan talks about “my community” and reflects on that community as a place with some shared core values and ways of interacting.

makes Ethan's lack of power clear when she redirects the conversation away from his concerns "in the interest of time" and because the class will address therapist-client "match" when they discuss multicultural issues in counseling.

When the other students in the class refuse to "hear" Ethan's experiences and the professor condones this refusal by moving the class away from Ethan's inquiry, the process of colonization is repeated rather than challenged, as was Ethan's intent in telling a story based on personal experience and temporarily inverting power relations within the classroom. Ethan is caught in a double bind where his nonparticipatory ontology causes the professor and other students to label him as "not a good student," yet when he attempts to participate in ways that would get other (White) students labeled as "good students," he is also ignored or silenced. When the professor disengages in the interaction "in the interest of time," she effectively silences Ethan for the rest of the semester. He asked one more question of the professor in the second half of the class period where the incident occurred and then did not ask another question for the rest of the semester. In this instance, a long history of enduring struggles between Indigenous peoples, institutional actors, and government policies influences how Ethan, the professor, and other students in the course position themselves and are positioned by others within the local contentious practice of the classroom.

Over the course of the school year, this interaction between Ethan and his professor continued to surface in conversations that I had with Ethan as an example of what it looks like when differing ontologies and epistemologies collide. Ultimately, Ethan reflected:

You just be quiet and, you know, do your work and, you know, not so much think that you're an individual or that you're not part of the community, but I just

believe you have to get those things done 'cause, when I do get my education ... If I do try to say something in class, it's for the community or for everyone If I get a master's degree and a PhD I can shed some light that maybe others have tried to in the past about this is why our culture's important and this is how it might help you. So, anyway, I'm just jumping through the hoops like everyone else is.

As Ethan makes clear in this comment, his time at the university and in classrooms is only a stepping stone on his way to his ultimate goal of helping his community and working to make Western and Indigenous knowledge systems more intelligible to one another. In order to achieve this goal, Ethan makes some strategic accommodations, such as adhering to conventional structures for essay writing or classroom participation (e.g., hand raising), and refuses to make others, such as perceiving himself as an individual competing with his peers or not challenging the professor's authority. These practices, influenced by familial and tribal histories as well as government policies, allow Ethan to remain a "good Indian" while fulfilling the academic requirements of the institution, even if he does not do so in such a way as to self-identify or to be identified by others as a "good student."

Steve: "I feel a lot of culture being a counselor."

Like Ethan, Steve struggles with the content of his educational psychology courses at Western University in relation to typical ways of interacting in his community. Like many disciplines, educational psychology has its own culture that includes particular ways of interacting and relating to others. As a result, one element of the school counseling program at Western University involves socialization into this culture through learning the historical and theoretical progression of the discipline as well as the skills that are currently used to "do counseling" in schools and other settings. In order to assess

how well students are being socialized into what it means to be a counselor, they are required to complete a series of mock counseling interviews over the course of the fall semester in their counseling skills class. The students must find someone different to act as their “client” for each of the mock interviews, in which the student and their “client” complete a thirty-minute videotaped session in which they address a problem of the “client’s” choosing. The problem can be a real problem that the “client” is having or an entirely made-up problem.

When I asked Steve if I could interview him for this study, he responded that I could interview him if I would let him interview me for one of these mock counseling sessions. In what I hoped was a gesture of reciprocity, I agreed to participate as the “client” for Steve’s assignment. On the appointed day, Steve and I set up the video camera in a vacant office down the hall from my office. We sat across from one another at a small circular table with two chairs and placed the camera on a desk located diagonally across from us in the small room. While Steve made sure the video camera was working and adjusted the focus, I asked him to explain my role in the interview as well as the professor’s grading criteria. He responded that he had already completed one videotaped mock counseling interview for the course and he had received feedback that there were several counseling skills he needed to improve upon. In particular, the professor suggested that Steve needed to improve his ability to reflect on what the “client” was saying in such a way as to be useful to the “client.” Briefly, this feedback may be responding to an epistemological issue about the responsibilities of the speaker and the listener similar to those issues that arose between Ethan and the professor. In the counseling profession, it is incumbent upon the counselor to make certain that he

understands what the client is saying and that the client understands his responses. Both of these skills fall under the heading of “reflection.” In contrast, in most Indigenous communities, the responsibility for making meaning falls solely on the listener. While Steve does not explicitly address the feedback he received about reflecting as an epistemological tension, I want to highlight that a tension may exist because I think it contextualizes some of Steve’s other comments around ontological and epistemological tensions.

Returning to the mock counseling interview, Steve pushed the record button and sat down across from me once the camera was satisfactorily adjusted. He initiated the session simply by asking me, “So, what’s on your mind today?” As the camera rolled, I told Steve that I was stressed out with school and had too much to do. We spent about thirty minutes with Steve asking me questions, me responding to his questions, and Steve practicing reflecting on what I had to say. When the thirty minutes allotted for the interview had elapsed, Steve was noticeably relieved. We turned off the video camera (which I later found out had been pointed only at me, failing to capture any of Steve’s mannerisms) and I began to interview Steve. Given his discomfort during the mock counseling interview and what I was observing in the classroom at that time, I asked a series of questions about the skills he was learning in his counseling skills class in relation to Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies.

I asked Steve how the knowledge he brought with him connected to what he was learning at the university. Initially Steve responded that the knowledge and ways of interacting he brought with him were respected by his professors and his peers. After a few moments of silence, however, he recalled being critiqued for not making eye contact

with his “clients” and reflected on his difficulties learning to make eye contact. He said:

Um, yeah, YEAH, one of that is eye contact, ya know. I’m not really good at eye contact. I don’t like it. ... I ah, I want to learn the most effective way to be a good counselor and if eye contact is important, I’ll, ... I want to learn that and I’ll try and learn it even though it goes against how I feel and how uncomfortable it might make me feel initially, but I want to learn that, so ... I don’t know if it would be counterproductive to have eye contact with Native American students or if it would help.

In this reflection, Steve illuminates an ability to reconceive and make productive an ontological tension around making eye contact. What could have been viewed as a problem is instead conceived of as a difference and an asset. This is similar to the ways in which Ethan talked about eye contact in university classrooms versus eye contact in his home community and recognized the strengths of each way of interacting in relation to his own ability to “flip the roles.” In his counseling skills class, Steve is being specifically instructed to make eye contact with his clients to show that he is paying attention and that he respects what they have to say. For Steve as a Native student from a community where eye contact is considered disrespectful, acquiring and practicing this skill is particularly difficult, but Steve emphasizes that he “want[s] to learn” to act this way if it is required to be “a good counselor.” Here, Steve chooses to adapt a particular community-based ontology around eye contact, while simultaneously highlighting his community’s emphasis on the value of elders and their wisdom (Basso, 1996; Medicine, 2001) as well as his identity as a future school counselor. As a member of his Indigenous community and the counseling community, Steve has unique skills and competencies that are likely to make him a better counselor of Native youth. He understands that eye contact is uncomfortable for him and other members of his community, but as someone who has not yet entered the counseling profession, Steve does not know whether or not

eye contact will be an effective counseling skill with Native American clients. What is notable in this situation is Steve's willingness to learn new skills that provide for the adaptation of Native ways of knowing and being to a twenty-first century world.

Steve's professor is someone that he respects as an authority on counseling skills and Steve's grade depends on his ability to demonstrate those counseling skills which the professor values. If the professor says that eye contact is required to become a "good counselor," who is Steve to question him? On the other hand, Steve is an expert within the realm of his own lived experiences and they suggest to him that eye contact may make American Indian students uncomfortable in the same way that it makes him uncomfortable and "goes against what [he] feel[s]." Ethan's earlier comments about eye contact would also corroborate Steve's perspective. Ultimately, in saying "I don't know if it would be counterproductive to have eye contact with Native American students or if it would help," Steve concludes that he does not have enough information to determine whether or not eye contact will be entirely counterproductive with American Indian students. As a result, he resolves to practice making eye contact because it will give him yet another option when he is interacting with his Native American clients in the future.

In Steve's desire to learn what the school counseling program has to offer in terms of theoretical orientations and counseling skills while also adhering to Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies, Steve's self-definition of someone who is "half and half" and his background as the son of someone who attended a boarding school are evident. As someone who is "half and half," Steve is comfortable drawing from Indigenous and White communicative repertoires, including making or not making eye contact as appropriate on a case-by-case basis. However, Steve gives his experiences secondary

value, privileging what his professor tells him will “work,” which is where the internalization of colonialist, imperialist, and racist assumptions taught at boarding schools is present. In fact, Steve may know with some degree of certainty that there are Native American students with whom eye contact will not work, but he devalues his own experiences within the university context. A large component of this devaluation is Steve’s internalization of educational policies and practices that diminish Indigenous ways of knowing and seek to replace them with Western notions of what counts as knowledge.

At times, Steve moves toward assimilating into the dominant group’s ontologies, but most of the time Steve appears to be taking the best of Western knowledge and incorporating it into a holistic Indigenous epistemological framework for the betterment of his community (Deloria & Wildcat, 2001). Battiste (2002) addresses this combination of knowledges when she remarks that, “Indigenous knowledge is far more than the binary opposite of western knowledge” (Battiste, 2002, p. 5). For the most part, Steve seems to find ways to combine Indigenous and Western knowledges. Part of this process happens as Steve navigates within the combined knowledge framework and thinks about translating the “system” for his future “clients.” In an interview during the fall semester he said:

I feel a lot of culture being a counselor, and they’re talking about ... so there’s a lot of culture like the head nod, the head nod, that we’re ... that we understand. Like, that’s a nonverbal cue that we’re following your conversation and that’s what we’re taught [as counselors], like, nod your head and maintain eye contact and reflecting. Ummm, I think ... head nodding, that’s a cultural thing that’s from another different culture where head nodding is just ... ya know, that’s something a lot of [Native American students] learned, but it’s not something they learned at home, to head nod to say “Oh, I understand.” But, It’s just, it’s, when you talk to me, I understand by going and doing it, ya know, instead of nodding my head ... So, I think that’s a big difference, head nodding, that’s a skill that

other [Native American] people might have to learn that I know of, like [wife's tribe].

In this comment, Steve discusses his socialization into the role of a school counselor by emphasizing the skills that he is required to learn (head nodding, reflection, eye contact). According to the counseling profession these skills indicate to a client that you are listening to what he or she says and engaged in trying to find a solution to his or her problem. In relation to these skills, Steve highlights the cultural translation process that he participates in as an Indigenous person, graduate student, and future school counselor and suggests that he will have to continue serving as a cultural translator, perhaps between Native students and non-Native teachers, when he becomes a counselor. First, as a student from an Indigenous community, Steve learned the value of the head nod and the appropriate context in which to use such a gesture. Then, Steve trained himself to nod his head when appropriate in a classroom setting or a mock counseling interview and remembered not to do so when it was inappropriate within his community. Finally, Steve believes that, when he becomes a school counselor, he will use the knowledge he has gained about how to make accommodations within the academy to aid Native students and to explain behavior such as the lack of a head nod to teachers so that they might not be so quick to judge Native students as deficient in one way or another. In these ways, Steve will be an important resource for Native students and non-Native students. For Steve, assisting in this translation process or serving as a “bridge” is another component of being a “good counselor” for American Indian students. Ultimately, Steve’s definition of a “good counselor” is someone who cares, someone who understands Native and dominant culture well enough to serve as a “bridge” between cultures, and someone who has the ability to help students envision and access a variety of life choices through the

application of appropriate counseling theories and procedures.

Summary

In this chapter, I described two particular interactions in which what it means to be an Indigenous person, a graduate student, and a future school counselor was called into question and negotiated. In each instance, I demonstrated the ways in which the participants attempt to serve as cultural translators for themselves as well as for their non-Indigenous peers in the counseling program, their professors, and the Indigenous students that they will counsel upon graduation from the program. In each interaction, there were connections to enduring historical struggles, such as those over self-determination, including self-education. Within the constellation of relations formed by the relationship between enduring historical struggles and the moments of local contentious practice, participants' identities as Indigenous individuals, graduate students, and future school counselors were coconstructed with various costs and benefits. For Ethan, he maintained his integrity as an Indigenous person and as a future counselor of Indian students but he lost what credibility he had as a student. For Steve, the Indigenous aspects of his identity are subsumed to his identities as a graduate student and a future school counselor in order to adapt particular counseling skills. Finally, Sara's "voice" is not present here because her struggles largely take place outside of the university context. Because of the experiences that she has had and the historical struggles with which she connects, Sara emphasizes her identities as a graduate student and a future school counselor over her Indigenous identity within the classroom context. That is, Sara views herself "like every other student, like your average student" and emphasizes that school is "just academic

stuff.” In part, this defense of her likeness to non-Indigenous students is a response to individuals constantly assuming that she struggles with school because she is Native American. It is also a result of the fact that Sara grew up in a predominantly White community where she was treated “like everybody else” except when she was pulled out of class for Indian education. In contrast to Ethan and Steve, Sara struggles most with the notion of defining herself as an Indigenous person in spite of Indigenous community members who question her ability to be Indigenous because she is lacking in place-based cultural knowledge. Taken together, the experiences of Sara, Ethan, and Steve suggest the range and variation in what it means (or may mean) to be an Indigenous individual, a graduate student, and a future school counselor of Native youth. In the following chapter, I conclude by outlining some of the implications of this study in relation to both the education of American Indian students within Western institutions of education and the education of future school counselors who will be working with diverse students.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

As I sit down to write this conclusion, almost exactly one year after conducting my last focus group, I find the participants also closing a chapter of their lives. Earlier this month, Sara, Ethan, and Steve graduated from Western University with master's degrees in school counseling and licensure, which will allow them to serve as full-fledged school counselors. To reflect back on their individual and collective journeys through the school counseling program is to recognize their accomplishments in full, the successes and struggles that contributed to who, what, and where they are today. In this chapter, I wish to return to the first year of the participants' journeys through Western University's school counseling program, highlighting salient aspects of their experiences in relation to one another and in relation to the larger historical, theoretical, and methodological issues discussed in Chapters I through III. In what follows, I first highlight some of the broader, theoretical contributions of this study. Then, I suggest some of the study's practical implications in relation to American Indian education, the preprofessional development of future school counselors, and the education of the American public.

Theoretical Implications

Recall that in Chapter III I drew upon Linda Smith's (1999) *Decolonizing Methodologies* to make the point that Indigenous peoples often find theorizing to be an intimidating project. She argues that long-standing practices rooted in colonialism, imperialism, and racism within the academy have often silenced Indigenous voices and the ways of knowing and being that they carry with them to such a degree that theorizing done by, for, and about Indigenous peoples seems impossible (Smith, 1999). While I, the ultimate narrator of the participants' experiences, am non-Native, I want to emphasize the ways in which the participants theorize their own experiences and explore what larger implications grow out of both their theorizing and the combination of Indigenous epistemologies with anthropological theories of culture, identity, and practice that informs the overall framing of this study as a whole. In particular, this study contributes to theoretical discussions of community membership and what it means to perform legitimate membership in that community. The study also makes theoretical contributions in its insistence in moving beyond simplistic dichotomies in the description (both popular and academic) and actualization of Indianness in the twenty-first century United States. Methodologically, my approach demonstrates the value of weaving together the perceptions, voices, and experiences of the participants with those of community members and university power brokers. What emerges is a multitextured account in which individual perceptions, voices, and experiences are comprehended and analyzed at the communal and institutional levels as well as at the individual level.

Much of the literature that investigates what it means to learn to be a part of a community (e.g., a cultural or professional group) focuses on an apprenticeship model in

which a novice is apprenticed to a master in the field and learns larger processes through watching and listening and then through doing. Citing Lave and Wenger (1991), Rogoff and her colleagues write that:

In many communities, observation skills are emphasized and honed as people attend closely to ongoing events in order to learn the practices of their community. If children are integrated in a wide range of community settings, they are able to observe and listen in on the ongoing activities of their community as *legitimate peripheral participants* (Rogoff, Paradise, Mejía Arauz, Correa-Chávez, & Angelillo, 2003, p. 179).

This notion of observation as a central component of learning the practices of the community resonates with the literature on Indigenous epistemologies and the classroom participation styles of American Indian students reviewed in Chapter II. For example, Battiste (2002) emphasizes the importance of “observing, listening, and participating with a minimum of intervention or instruction” (p. 17) when she outlines the principles of Aboriginal learning. Similarly, Tayo in *Ceremony* (Silko, 1977) and Talbert in *Wisdom Sits in Places* (Basso, 1996) must listen to the stories that they hear *and* observe the nuances of the landscape in order to acquire knowledge that is central to the lives of their respective communities. There are also many examples in Chapters IV through VI where learning by doing or having real-world experience are central to the processes by which Sara, Ethan, and Steve become participants in particular communities (e.g., the professional community of school counselors). In Chapter V, Sara emphasizes the value of her experiences working with Indian students over her academic credentials while, in contrast, Steve stresses that he wants to try out different counseling practices before deciding which ones will work for Native American students and which will not. For the participants, observation and experience play an important role in their participation in Indigenous communities, the academic community at Western University, and the

professional community of school counselors. In this way, their experiences echo the existing literature on learning through intent participation (Rogoff et al., 2003) and apprenticeship (Gawande, 2002; Jordan, 1989; Lave, 1996; Rose, 1999). However, the accounts of Sara, Ethan, and Steve also complicate the assumptions of such models. While the literature on becoming a community member through participation acknowledges that an individual may be a member of multiple communities, little attention is paid to what it might mean when the cultural lives of two or more communities are discordant or how such dissonance might shape the identity of an individual engaged in both communities.

Additionally, although Rogoff et al. (2003) emphasize that processes of learning to participate in community life are “not tied to locales or settings” (p. 184), Sara, Ethan, and Steve view the ontologies and epistemologies in which their membership in various communities is rooted as intimately connected to place and to the historical experiences of American Indians in the United States. As Ethan describes in Chapter IV, growing up Indian in a particular geographic place instilled in him particular beliefs and values that guide his conduct at home and at Western University. In a similar vein, Sara’s conduct in American Indian communities and at Western University is guided by the experience of being questioned about her identity as an Indigenous person (which is closely connected to the impact of termination on particular tribes). She is constantly taking preventative measures like becoming involved in the Intertribal Students’ Association or achieving academically. This contrast between existing theories of learning to be a community member and the theories that emerge through the telling of Sara, Ethan, and Steve’s experiences and the presence of their voices suggests the importance of approaching

questions of identity and community membership through a broader lens that takes into account the importance of particular places and histories, as well as the implications of membership in multiple, sometimes contradictory or competitive communities. I want to suggest that this study contributes to such a project through the combination of anthropological theory and ethnographic methods with Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies. Such a lens allows for the incorporation of local, situated knowledge and broader social and historical context.

Another strength of combining Indigenous epistemologies with a history-in-person approach is the way that this framework moves beyond dichotomies which both reinscribe existing master narratives and fail to explain the lived complexity of what it means to be an Indigenous individual and community member in the twenty-first century. Rather than viewing Indigenous identity as fixed in time (the past) and space (John Wayne movies or popular Thanksgiving narratives), an emphasis on Indigenous epistemologies in combination with anthropological theories of culture, identity, and practice allows us to view individual differences in the construction and performance of identities that are culturally and historically situated, ideologically-laden, and varied across individuals, communities, and geographic locales. However, such an approach also has its challenges and tensions because it simultaneously explores somewhat uncharted theoretical territory and responds to an ongoing, often essentialized conversation about how to explain and improve upon the educational needs and preferences of American Indian students. Recall from Ethan's interaction with the professor (Chapter VI) around client-centered approaches to counseling that she perceived his comments as only relevant during the week spent on multicultural issues in

school counseling. Reflecting on the situation, Ethan recognized that the professor, entrenched in her own beliefs and perceptions, saw the situation differently than he did. Additionally, in my analysis of the interaction, I focus on Ethan's behavior as stemming from particular Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies. While I attempt to connect these to Ethan's own life experiences, the danger exists that such statements may be read as part of an essentializing discourse that seeks to reinscribe old binaries in new ways. Thus, while Battiste (2002) emphasizes that, "Indigenous knowledge is far more than the binary opposite of Western knowledge" and "creates a new, balanced centre and a fresh vantage point" (p. 5), this fresh vantage point also comes with challenges rooted in the limits of language and perception connected to a long history of colonialism, racism, and imperialism in the United States. Outlining this tension, Marker (2004) writes that:

One of the central problems... is that words—in English—are presently owned by an academic culture that has some consensus on the legitimate definition of these terms and activities. Indigenous scholars must either reinvent new words and then struggle upstream against the prevailing current to wedge them into the academic lexicon, or expand the meaning of conventional terms to include Indigenous perspective. This means essentially seizing a word and saying, "this is what *we* mean when we say *science*, or *epistemology*, or *respectful methodology* (p. 103).

Based on Marker's arguments about the limits of existing language to describe and explain Indigenous knowledges, I wish to emphasize not only the need for more and better ways of talking and writing about Indigenous epistemologies, but also the importance of engaging with and attempting to alter larger discourses at the institutional and societal levels. As the reflections of Sara, Ethan, and Steve indicate (Chapter IV), it is impossible to construct one's identity within a vacuum. Rather, individuals construct and reconstruct identities for themselves as others respond to and judge these presentations of self. In the case of Ethan's interaction with the professor, it is difficult to

unpack all of the nuances of Ethan's actions in and comments on the interaction not only as a result of the limits of existing terminology, but also because the professor is ascribing a particular essentialized identity to Ethan. In some ways, this ascription precludes a nuanced analysis of the ways that Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies guide Ethan's actions and shape his identity as a person. Further, Ethan knows that, within the context of Western University's school counseling program, his own ways of knowing and being are devalued and *perceived* as being the binary opposite of Western ways of knowing and being. As a result, he highlights the *distinct* elements of his Indigenous identity as not only a demonstration of individual and collective Indigenous pride, but also as a strategy for coping with the strongly assimilatory policies and practices of the counseling program and of education for American Indians generally. Similarly, recall that Ethan was criticized for "becoming White," while Sara was chastised for not being "Native enough" (Chapter IV). These critiques illustrate a continuum of possibilities in terms of what it means to be an Indigenous individual in the twenty-first century and suggest that others in society at large are locating Sara, Ethan, and Steve in relation to one particular fixed notion of what it means to be American Indian. Another illustration of this point comes in Sara's poem, "Lessons," where she responds to her individual critics while also saying something about larger issues of identity politics in American Indian communities.

When engaged dialogically, we are always simultaneously authoring ourselves, being authored by others, and responding to their perceptions of us. Given the history of colonialism, imperialism, and racism in the United States, one of the challenges of employing an Indigenous epistemological framework is to address the simultaneously

collective and context-specific nature of Indigenous epistemologies in relation to the syntactic limits of the English language and the essentializing discourses present at the institutional and societal levels. In spite of these challenges, moving beyond dichotomies, which locate individuals as either Indigenous or not, as either traditional or not, and so on, is necessary if we wish to move beyond notions of American Indians as romantic figures from the past (Brayboy, 2004a; Owens, 2001) and acknowledge their multiple roles in present-day U.S. society. For example, even though they go about the process quite differently, Sara, Ethan, and Steve individually and collectively find ways to serve as cultural translators who are capable of integrating Western and Indigenous ways of knowing and being. For instance, while Steve seeks to incorporate Western counseling practices into his repertoire in order to have as many options as possible for helping his clients (Chapter VI), Ethan challenges his predominantly White classmates in the counseling program to see a particular theoretical paradigm through an Indigenous lens (Chapter VI). In contrast, Sara finds interactions around counseling theories and procedures to be relatively comfortable and instead focuses her energies on managing her own subjectivities (and questions about her “Indianness”) within the context of the AITTP. In order to adequately portray the experiences of those individuals who discuss their lived experiences as occurring in or between two worlds (Deyhle, 1992; Henze & Vanett, 1993) or see themselves as “good Indians” and “good students” simultaneously (Brayboy, 1999, 2004a, 2005a), it is necessary to move beyond dichotomous ways of thinking about what it means to be an Indigenous person. We must also begin to think more seriously about the theoretical and practical integration of Western and Indigenous ways of knowing and being in relation to long histories of colonialism, imperialism, and

racism in the United States. As the Laguna Pueblo medicine man (Ku'oosh) who tries to cure Tayo in *Ceremony* (Silko, 1977) articulates, "There are some things we can't cure like we used to ... not since the white people came" (p. 38). This also goes back to Deloria's notion that "no culture has all the answers" (1970, p. 115) and Warrior's belief in the adaptability of culture to new contexts and new problems.

The combination of anthropological theories of culture, identity, and practice and Indigenous epistemologies employed throughout this study makes theoretical contributions to our understanding of the complicated processes by which individuals become community members, as well as to our understanding of the limits and possibilities for moving beyond dichotomies in order to theorize the lived complexity of everyday life. Finally, this study builds on the theoretical contributions of Indigenous scholars (Battiste, 2002; Brayboy, 1999, 2005a) who emphasize the importance of community in guiding the actions of individuals.

A methodological implication of this study, growing out of an Indigenous epistemological framework and previously touched upon by Brayboy (2005a), is the importance of analyzing data through the lens of community. That is, recognizing the importance of both collectively held knowledge and the importance of the collective good in motivating the actions of Indigenous individuals is important because they have significant bearing on individual choices. For example, Ethan discusses both his community's changing perceptions of him and their expectations of him as a leader (Chapter V). Similarly, recall that Sara decided to apply for the AITTP at Western University at the encouragement of one of the Native professors at the institution where she completed her undergraduate degree (Chapter IV). This speaks to a larger

community expectation that American Indian individuals, regardless of their tribal affiliation, will work to help other American Indian individuals and communities, an ethic that is also reflected in the AITTP requirement that graduates must serve American Indian communities upon completion of their degrees. Further, it seeks to address Deloria's concern (1969/1988) that, "abstract theories create abstract action" which is incapable of solving real-world problems. With that in mind, I now turn to some of the practical implications of this study.

Practical Implications

This study, while focused on the experiences of three very different American Indian individuals and not generalizable across contexts, has some broad practical implications that are derived from the broader theoretical implications discussed earlier in this chapter. In this section, I discuss how the findings of this study might be employed to alter (and hopefully improve) the experience of K-12 schooling and higher education for American Indian students. I begin by addressing the need for more American Indian school counselors. Then, I explore the implications of this study for those individuals involved in the training and preprofessional development of school counselors and other educational professionals. I then suggest ways in which the structure of counseling programs and educational institutions as a whole might change to better accommodate the needs and lived experiences of all students, especially those whose perspectives are not usually incorporated in master narratives of schooling practices. Finally, I consider the education of the American public in relation to the education of diverse learners from all backgrounds in America's public schools.

Mi'kmaq scholar, Marie Battiste (2002), reminds us that individuals learn differently and, further, that those aiding in their learning processes, whether that learning is about themselves or the solar system, must be able to approach them using “a variety of styles of participation and information exchanges” (p. 18). In relation to the experiences of Sara, Ethan, and Steve in the school counseling program at Western University, this suggests that the individual instructors and programs responsible for preparing school counselors and other educational professionals must both approach their own students as diverse learners with distinct ways of being and knowing and prepare them for counseling individuals with distinct ways of being and knowing that may or may not match-up with those of the counselor. Instances like Ethan's interaction with his professor around the issue of client-therapist “match,” provide isolated examples of educational practices that exclude individual students or groups of students. Taken together, however, they suggest that counseling educators might reconsider their pedagogical practices as well as the theories behind them. What, we might ask, is the goal of preparing American Indian school counselors or counselors from any non-dominant group? In order to answer this question, we must also take into account the historical goals of educating Indigenous individuals in such a way as to eradicate their “Indianness,” which is perhaps best encapsulated in Colonel Richard Pratt's (1892/1973) notion of “kill the Indian, save the man.” According to Marker (2004):

In Canada and the United States, residential schooling was deployed to replace the Aboriginal child's actual identity, language, and connection to the land with a shadow personality that would serve the interests of mainstream economic and cultural goals toward colonial dominance. The results of this dark experiment continue to plague both Aboriginal and dominant societies (p. 103).

This link between what goes on in classrooms today and what has historically gone on in

classrooms (for example, the legacy of boarding schools and education aimed at assimilation or extinction for American Indians) is frequently ignored when questions about the purposes of schooling broadly and specifically the goals of a counseling education are examined. For instance, recall how the professor bracketed Ethan's experiences and described them as only relevant during a conversation on "multicultural issues" (Chapter VI). This situation reminds us of the ways in which colonialism, imperialism, and racism are endemic in society (Brayboy, 2005b; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Smith, 1999; Solorzano & Bernal, 2001) in that the relegation of Ethan's experiences as 'cultural' ignores the unique political status of American Indians and the historical policies and practices with regard to the education of American Indians. By addressing these connections between the participants' present learning styles and historical processes, I hope that this study contributes to nuanced understandings of American Indian student behavior in classrooms and suggests ways in which counseling educators and others involved in the preparation of American Indian educational professionals might alter their practices based on the educational context in which they and their students find themselves.

Little scholarship exists that has the power to adequately explain the connection between American Indians and educational institutions with regard to local, place-based Indigenous knowledge systems. As a result, institutions that train teachers and school counselors for American Indian communities lack appropriate frameworks for teaching about and/or across difference because they fail to take the unique historical experiences and political status of American Indians into account. Battiste (2002) argues that:

Few teacher training institutions have developed any insight into the diversity of the legal, political, and cultural foundations of Aboriginal peoples, often treating

Indigenous knowledge as though it were a matter of multi-cultural and cross-cultural education. Consequently, when educators encounter cultural difference, they have very little theory, scholarship, research, or tested practice to draw on or engage Aboriginal education in a way that is not assimilative or racially defined, as opposed to being legally and politically shaped by constitutional principles of respect for Aboriginal and treaty rights (p. 9).

Thus, the professor's comments about addressing Ethan's concerns during a class on "multicultural issues" are dialogic in nature. While the professor utters the comments, they are also populated with the words of others that originate in historical struggles over American Indian identity and educational policy. For example, much of the literature on classroom interaction and learning style (reviewed in Chapter II) locates differences between American Indian students and predominantly White teachers in the realm of culture and makes the assumption that Native students should assimilate into dominant ways of interacting. The power relations behind this assumption, established via numerous historical policies and practices, including BIA boarding schools, the Dawes Act, and termination, are still at work and need to be acknowledged. In other words, the enduring historical struggle over the assimilation or self-determination of American Indians is influencing the interaction between Ethan and the professor, playing a role in how they present themselves to one another and how they interpret each other's actions and comments. Building on Battiste's (2002) comments about a lack of practical models or theories for engaging Indigenous students within Western Institutions of education, Marker (1998) also addresses racial tensions outside of the classroom that may influence how such interactions unfold. He reflects:

Dealing with the legacy of Indian-White tensions in the academy will require critical, not altered, states of consciousness. While creating a fanciful aboriginal identity, faculty and students are distracted from the important work of analyzing the concrete circumstances of Indian-white relations in the community that surrounds the university. ... If one examines the substrata of these settings, it

becomes easier to understand why American Indians are so popular as stereotypes and so unpopular as real people (p. 479).

What Marker (1998) and Battiste (2002) are articulating, in concert with the voices and experiences of the participants in this study, is a need for new ways of thinking about the education of American Indian school counselors, teachers, and administrators that acknowledge past and present contexts while simultaneously looking into the future. Admittedly, it is difficult to cater to the distinct contextual needs of thirty future school counselors, but what such a view fails to recognize is that all of those future school counselors will “encounter cultural difference” (Battiste, 2002, p. 9) and they will need to know how to work across, through, and beyond it in meaningful and appropriate ways. Individual instructors may start by providing more situated instruction in their classrooms and by valuing the distinct classroom practices of all of their students, but what is ultimately needed is change at the level of institutional policies and practices.

As we saw in Chapter V, the school counseling program at Western University has a particular view of what is required to be a school counselor, including specifications about how the necessary skills are to be learned and demonstrated. The program emphasized a “research knowledge base,” where research was narrowly defined as growing out of Western science, particularly psychology. Further, skills were usually assessed on an individual basis and students were expected to adhere to particular “norms” of classroom participation and to complete writing assignments in a specific format. These policies and practices contribute to the reproduction of colonization, imperialism, and racism in the academy by continuing to hold all individuals and communities to the same standards without acknowledging their role in maintaining the privileged position of Western knowledge over other ways of knowing and being (Bernal

& Villalpando, 2002; Deloria & Wildcat, 2001; Marker, 2003). There is a dire need for change at the level of institutional policies and practices. At the level of this study, for example, the school counseling program at Western University must make the shift from claiming to value both a “research knowledge base” and the needs of the community to actually doing so. In part, the presence of students from nondominant groups and changes made by individual instructors and administrators will begin to alter institutional policies and practices. However, there is concomitant need to educate the American public about both the history of the United States and the present needs of its communities and their students.

In Chapter II, I describe Staurowsky’s (1999) interest in the powerful and dangerous miseducation of the American public in relation to “this nation’s history relative to American Indians” (p. 383) and Shanley’s (2001) exploration of epistemological misunderstanding. Throughout Chapters IV through VI, these issues surface for Sara, Ethan, and Steve as they are forced to explain who they are, where they come from, why they look (or do not look) a particular way, and why they think (or do not think) in particular ways. I hope that the ways in which this study explores the dialogic nature of identity construction and strategic accommodation begins to alter how a small segment of the American public understands the history of American Indians in relation to the policies and practices of the U.S. government. I also hope that it clarifies some existing misunderstandings about the nature of Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies, how they operate in the world, and their relation to Western conceptions of knowledge. Most importantly, I hope this study challenges dominant conceptions of American Indians as romantic figures from our nation’s past and makes a contribution to

broader understandings of the multiple ways in which it is possible to be a living, breathing, dynamic American Indian individual and community member in the twenty-first century.

APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Research Study Consent Form

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you volunteer to take part in this research study.

BACKGROUND:

This study is being done on American Indian Teacher Training Program (AITTP) students' schooling experiences in and out of classes at the University. We are studying this issue because we believe that there are important insights for AITTP, professors, and students in general. Your experiences that can help us to understand what happens/has happened in schools (primary, secondary, and post-secondary) and in teacher preparation programs.

STUDY PROCEDURE:

You may be asked to participate in one or all of the following:

- One or two audio- and/or video-recorded 60-90 minute oral life history interviews emphasizing experiences of education and schooling (you may choose not to be recorded during the interview).
- Part or all of a series of three 60-90 minute formal, audio- and/or video-recorded interviews (you may choose not to be recorded during the interview).
- Informal interviews, which may or may not be audio-recorded. This decision will be made jointly by you and the researcher.
- Informal conversations and interactions with researchers.
- Responses to written prompts given by the researchers.
- Observation of AITTP students in and out of class.
- Observation of program staff and professors as they interact with AITTP students in classrooms, AITTP program offices, and other venues on campus (e.g. office hours).
- The photocopying of your written coursework, admissions essays, and other documents relevant to your academic career at the university.

RISKS:

The risks of this study are minimal. However, should you choose to participate in video-recorded interviews, we cannot protect your anonymity. If you participate in video-recording, we will ask for your approval before showing the data to a larger audience (e.g. showing video clips as part of a conference presentation). In general, you may feel upset thinking about or talking about personal information related to your experiences at the University of Utah. These risks are similar to those you experience when disclosing

personal information to others. If you feel upset from this experience, you can tell the researchers and they will let you know of resources available to help.

BENEFITS:

We can not promise any direct benefit for taking part in this study. However, your participation in this study allows us to improve the AITTP program model to better meet the needs of AITTP students and to help professors and program staff to do so as well. We also hope that the information we get from this study may help AITTP in the future. Further, we believe that the information gathered may assist the faculty and staff of the College of Education and AITTP in better meeting the needs of their American Indian students.

ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURES:

You may choose to participate in some of the procedures described above and not others. We do not require your full participation if any aspect of the study procedures makes you uncomfortable. Another alternative is not to participate in the study. Should you change your mind about participation in this study, please contact Bryan Brayboy, the principal investigator, in writing and we will not use any data we have collected as a result of your participation in this study. Written correspondence may be directed to the address listed below.

Dr. Bryan Brayboy
Dept. of Education, Culture, & Society, MBH 307
University of Utah
1705 E. Campus Center Dr.
Salt Lake City, UT 84112

CONFIDENTIALITY:

Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality, but we cannot guarantee confidentiality. As mentioned above, if you to participate in video-recorded interviews, we cannot protect your anonymity. While your data will be kept confidential, there are some cases in which a researcher is legally obligated to report issues, such as serious threats to public health or safety. Also, if you disclose actual or suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a child, or disabled or elderly adult, the researcher or any member of the study staff must, and will, report this to Child Protective Services (CPS), Adult Protective Services (APS) or the nearest law enforcement agency. We do not expect these issues to arise during this study, but we want you to understand our legal obligations as researchers should they arise. Your data will be kept confidential. Every possible effort will be made to keep all other information confidential by AITTP. All data will be stored in a locked file cabinet in the principal investigator's office or in a password locked computer. Only AITTP program staff involved in this research project will have access to the data. If any video of you is used in presentations resulting from this research, you will be consulted ahead of time. If you are quoted in any publications from this research, you will be given the choice of having your idea/words attributed to you or to a made-up or fake name. Please check which option you would prefer below.

- ☐ Quotes may be attributed to me. ☐ I would prefer quotes be attributed to a made-up or fake name.
- ☐ I agree to be video taped and I understand that I may change my mind at any time. ☐ I do not agree to be videotaped.

PERSON TO CONTACT:

If you have any questions about this consent form or about the study as a whole, please contact Bryan Brayboy at (801) 581-4207 (office) or (801) 330-4378 (cell).

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD:

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research subject, or if problems arise which you do not feel you can discuss with the Investigator, please contact the Institutional Review Board Office at (801) 581-3655.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION:

It is up to you whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be asked to sign this consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason. This will not affect the relationship you have with the investigators or the other AITTP staff. As a staff member, your ongoing financial support is not contingent on participation in this research.

UNFORESEEABLE RISKS:

There may be risks that we do not anticipate. However, every effort will be made to minimize any risks.

COMPENSATION FOR SUBJECTS:

As a member of the AITTP staff, you will not receive any financial compensation for participation in this research.

CONSENT:

By signing this consent form, I confirm that I have read and understood the information and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason and without cost. I understand that I will be given a signed copy of this consent form. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.

Printed Name of Participant

Signature of Participant

Date

Printed Name of Researcher

Signature of Researcher

Date

APPENDIX B

INITIAL INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

INITIAL INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

- 1) Tell me about your experiences with school up to this point.
- 2) Were you a “good” student? What is a “good” student?
- 3) Did you have an adviser or a guidance counselor? What kind of information did he/she give you about classes you should take and about college?
- 4) Where did you attend college? What was your experience as an undergraduate?
- 5) Did you participate in classes? How? (by asking questions, mandatory oral presentations)
- 6) Are there some classroom formats you like better than others?
- 7) What is it like to participate in-class in graduate school?
- 8) What do you think is required to get an “A” for participation in your graduate-level courses now? Does this differ by instructor or by subject?
- 9) How are you expected to participate in class as a graduate student?
- 10) How is it different from your undergraduate career and from high school?
- 11) Do you feel like you were well-prepared for the kind of class participation that is required in graduate school?
- 12) What kinds of assignments do instructors give you that require in-class participation or participation in other ways?

APPENDIX C

FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

- 1) Tell me what a typical day looks like for you. What do you do, where do you go, who do you hang out with how much time do you spend on particular activities.
- 2) How would you characterize yourself as a student? (As an Indigenous person??)
- 3) About how often do you attend classes?
- 4) When do you participate in your classes? Why do you participate?
- 5) When don't you participate in your classes? Why not?
- 6) How do you show that you're interested in what is going on in class or that you're paying attention? Disinterested or not paying attention?
- 7) Do you take notes in class?
- 8) How do you take notes in class? What do you take notes on?
- 9) Do you sit where you sit for a particular reason?
- 10) How do you define your community at the university? How do you define your community more broadly?
- 11) Outside of class, what kinds of study strategies work for you?
- 12) Do you use study groups?
- 13) How do you prepare for a test?
- 14) How do you prepare to write a paper?

APPENDIX D

FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL

FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL

- 1) What does it mean to you to be in AITTP and why are you in the program? What does it mean to your community (communities) that you are in the program?
- 2) Do you think that you have a role or roles within AITTP? Within the school counseling program? Within the university community as a whole?
- 3) How do you think you are perceived by your peers within the program and within the College of Education more generally?
- 4) How do you think you are perceived by your professors?
- 5) What are some of the issues you have faced as American Indian graduate students and future school counselors?
- 6) In Bryan's dissertation and in a lot of the articles he has published he talks about the American Indian students in his study as being "good Indians" and "good students" at the same time by finding culturally comfortable ways to navigate the university system? Does the notion of being "good Indians" and "good students" resonate for you? Do you have particular strategies for navigating the Institution and possibly resisting the institution?
- 7) I would argue, from my interactions with the three of you, that you have multiple roles or identities as Indigenous people, graduate students, and future school counselors. What do you think about this? How would you talk about this idea that you bring Indigenous knowledge with you that sometimes bumps up against what your professors are teaching, but, it seems, you find ways to deal with this in service of Indigenous communities? In other words, you never seem to lose sight of the end goal.
- 8) In the last question and other questions, I've used the phrases American Indian and Indigenous. I've also heard you at various times use Native or Native American. One of the big struggles in the literature is what does it mean to be "Indigenous" and who gets to define that. What's your take on the various terms and phrases and who has the power to define what it means to be "Indian enough"?
- 9) Are there questions I am not asking that I should be asking? Do you have questions you want to ask each other or ask me?
- 10) What do you think AITTP, current and future students, and your professors can learn from your experiences?

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